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ABSTRACT

An annotated conference program, a narrative summary of the main document, and a detailed list of items and recommendations for conference consideration comprise this working document for the 1982 International Congress on Universal Availability of Publications (UAP). An introductory presentation outlines the structure of the Congress and defines the concept and scope of UAP, which includes printed, audiovisual, and electronically-published materials. Subsequent chapters consider five issues related to UAP: (1) publication access and availability to users, including methods of evaluating user information needs and the orientation of professional information training towards concepts of publication use and availability; (2) the production and supply of publications, including aspects of authorship, printing, publishing, copyright, and distribution; (3) acquisition policies and practices, including the development of systematic national acquisition policies and the requirements and mechanics of effective systems; (4) the organization of publication repositories and their links with acquisition and interlending systems; and (5) national and international interlending, including levels of satisfaction with interlending, speed of supply, and cost factors. A summary list of ideas notes the need for national information planning and development, for international cooperation in the provision of publications, and for further research into UAP. Various model systems and lists of recommendations are proposed throughout the working document. (ESR)

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INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS

ON

UNIVERSAL AVAILABILITY OF PUBLICATIONS

Paris, 3-7 May 1982

MAIN WORKING DOCUMENT

including

ANNOTATED PROGRAMME

and

SUMMARY

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INTRODUCTION

The organization of the International Congress on Universal Availability of Publications (UAP) was approved by the General Conference of Unesco at its twenty-first session in November 1980. The purpose of the Congress, according to the Approved Programme and Budget of Unesco for the period 1981-1983 is described thus: 'An international congress (Category IV) on the Universal Availability of Publications (UAP) will be organized in Paris, in co-operation with the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA), to secure support for the programme and to discuss its development.

The working document consists of three parts:

Part I : The annotated programme

Part II : A summary of the content of the chapters of the main document

Part III: The main working document

The main working document is divided into seven chapters, each corresponding to a point on the programme of the Congress. Chapter 1 for instance corresponds to item 4.1 on the programme, Chapter 2 to item 4.2, and so on.

Each of the first six chapters discusses a particular aspect, mainly in relation to users, of the problem of universal availability of publications. Chapter 7 is a summary of the problem as a whole with proposals for international action towards the resolution of the problem.

The main working document should not be considered as exposing all aspects of UAP or as expounding all available solutions to the problem. Its aim is principally to outline some of the important points with the object of facilitating discussions of the Congress. Participants are invited to bring to the attention of the Congress points, whether dealt with in the document or otherwise, which to them seem important in the context of the subject being discussed and, where possible, to suggest appropriate remedies.

The main working document and the annotated programme and summary were prepared by the IFLA Office for International Lending under contract from Unesco and according to guidelines drawn up by the Preparatory Committee of UAP. This Committee, consisting of representatives of Unesco and IFLA met on four occasions (29-30 April 1980; 18-19 November 1980; 23-24 March; 7-8 December 1981) to discuss the organization of the Congress and progress in the preparation of the document.

The Bureau of the Intergovernmental Council of the General Information Programme of Unesco, during its 4th Session (16-18 June 1980) and its 5th Session (9-12 December 1980) also gave its views on the orientation of the document as well as that of the Congress.

Mention should also be made of the very valuable contributions made by other non-governmental organizations, through participation at the preparatory meetings and advice on various aspects of UAP related to their fields of activity. The following organizations were thus involved: Fédération internationale de documentation (FID), International Council on Archives (ICA), International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU), International Group of Scientific, Technical and Medical Publishers (STM), International Booksellers Federation (IBF)and International Publishers Association (IPA).

Advice and assistance was also recieved from many individuals during the preparation of the document. To all those who helped, Unesco and IFLA express their thanks and gratitude and hope that their reward will be the success of this international Congress.

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PART I

ANNOTATED PROGRAMME

Chapter 1 - Presentation on UAP

Objective: To familiarize participants with the concept and scope of UAP; to emphasize the need for availability, the need for improvement and the benefits to be derived. To outline the structure of the Congress, the role of various functions and agents of action.

Discussion: Discussion of this chapter is not anticipated. It provides the background to subsequent chapter which treat individual aspects in greater detail, at which point contributions from participants will be welcomed.

Expected results: A broad understanding of the philosophy of UAP, its definition and scope should lead to a clearer recognition of the importance, scale and urgency of the matter, the nature of action required and the appropriate agents of action. The aspects treated in subsequent chapters can be better perceived and more fairly considered in their context.

Chapter 2 - Access and availability to users

Objective: To ensure consideration of the needs of users, both actual and potential, who must be seen as an integral part of the total information system when designing and implementing library and information services.

Discussion: Technical and managerial aspects of services are considered in subsequent chapters. This chapter is concerned with, and participants are invited to comment on, the need to consider the requirements of users and the obstacles they face, methods of evaluating the needs of users, both actual and potential, the need for and methods of educating users in the handling and use of information resources from an early stage, and the need to orientate the training of professionals and the services they provide more towards concepts of use and availability.

Expected results: The greater consideration of users should improve the planning and implementation of services and should result in the adoption of methods and procedures that will improve levels of satisfaction, increase use, create higher expectations and greater demands which in turn will lead to financial gains, open up new lines of work and other innovations, and support and enhance endogenous development at all levels.

Recommendations: Recommendations are made concerning user needs, user education, the integration of library and information use into education, training of professional staff, the planning and implementation of services of optimum convenience for users, and the provision of adequate access points.

Chapter 3 - Production and supply of publications

Objectives: To examine obstacles to UAP related to the publication and distribution of material. To seek solutions through the appropriate involvement of publishers, booksellers, librarians and other information professionals, professional associations, governments and other relevant agencies.

Discussion: Through a consideration of obstacles to production and supply participants are invited to comment on the need for and methods of securing the prompt availability from publishers through effective distribution channels of publications both within countries, especially developing countries, and between countries. Participants are invited to comment particularly on supply and acquisition; comments on authorship, printing, publishing and copyright should be restricted to matters relevant to UAP. Participants might wish to refer some matters related to book publishing and use to the forthcoming World Book Congress.

Expected results: Guidance for the formulation and implementation of policies and procedures to improve the publication, and especially the supply, of material to ensure the speedier availability of needed information to support personal, educational, social and economic development, which will result in a gradual but extensive growth of a market for publications at all levels. Special emphasis should be given to production and supply of publications in relation to libraries as clients.

Recommendations: Recommendations are made concerning the development of libraries, improvements to bibliographic control, legal deposit regulations, the removal of unnecessary and harmful barriers, better availability of and publicity for non-conventional publications, the development of indigenous publishing, the establishing of and co-operation between professional associations, the development of training programmes, the exploitation and development of local resources and the role of national book development councils.

Chapter 4 - Acquisitions policies and practices

Objective: To consider the need for and development of organized policies and procedures by the libraries, documentation and information centres and similar organizations of individual countries to ensure the systematic collection for purposes of supply between institutions (either in the original or, within existing copyright legislation, as copies) of all national imprints and sufficient foreign publications to meet a significant and economic proportion of the total demands of users.

Discussion: Participants are invited to consider the need for action and for the development of systematic national acquisition policies and procedures, the extent of coverage of a national acquisition policy, the requirements and mechanics of effective systems. Possible model systems are put forward. Detailed discussion of the models is not anticipated though participants may wish to comment on their appropriateness to their own circumstances, and give consideration to the weight and importance of relative advantages and disadvantages.

Expected results: Guidance as to the formulation and implementation of policies and procedures that will lead to the improved satisfaction of local needs, by allowing the optimum use of local resources while ensuring the provision of material to meet further requirements as and when necessary; thus ensuring optimum provision of documentation to support the development of literacy, education and research at all levels both for indigenous development and the development of other countries through the availability to them of national imprints.

Recommendations: Recommendations are made concerning the introduction of national acquisition policies, the evaluation of existing policies, the availability within and from each country of its national imprints and other material for inclusion in policies, legal deposit regulations, and the responsibilities of former colonial powers to their former territories.

Chapter 5 - Repository policies and planning

Objective: To consider the need for and methods of achieving the permanent availability of publications through the development of organized policies and procedures for the systematic retention of material to meet future needs.

Discussion: Participants may wish to comment on the need for the development of repository plans and policies. Discussions should not be limited to legal deposit collections, which are generally concerned with the necessary preservation of material to meet archival purposes and do not contribute greatly to UAP. Comments are invited on the organization of repositories, in particular on their link with acquisition and interlending systems, on the distribution of duplicates and the need for conservation. Consideration may also be given to a number of key factors, in particular the ownership of deposited material, problems of relegation, and the appropriateness of several model systems.

Expected results: The development of appropriate policies and systems will allow the retention of material to meet the future needs of a country and the retention of national imprints will allow countries to meet international obligations. When the repository role is linked with a national interlending system individual institutions can discard material to an appropriate centre in the knowledge that it will subsequently be available should need arise. Local libraries should thus be able to maintain optimum collections that are easy both to administer and to use.

Chapter 6 - National and international interlending policies and practices

Objective: To consider the need for and development of interlending policies and systems as essential elements in national library and information services for the improved supply of publications not held locally, to distant users (either in the original or, within existing copyright legislation, as copies), both within countries and in other countries.

Discussion: Participants are invited to confirm the need for systematic policies and procedures. Comment is sought in particular on methods of meeting the criteria by which systems should be judged--chiefly level of satisfaction, speed of supply and costs--on the use of reprographic copies, on methods of organizing union catalogues and on technological developments. Comments are also invited on methods of organizing national interlending systems and on the suitability and advantages of the various models. Participants are also invited to consider the need for measures at the international level.

Expected results: Guidance on the formulation and implementation of policies and procedures that will increase the probability of meeting users' needs quickly and economically. This would enable individual libraries to use their resources more effectively to meet the immediate needs of their own local users, on the understanding that additional material to meet other requirements can be obtained from elsewhere as and when required. The availability in and from each country of its national imprints would not only help to satisfy some of the needs of its citizens, but is essential if publications are to be universally available. The development of national interlending systems that respond efficiently to each country's requirements would inevitably benefit international availability. Improved international supply would help to ensure comprehensive availability and aid individual countries in the planning of their national systems.

Recommendations: Recommendations are made concerning the introduction and evaluation of national interlending policies and systems, the availability within and from each country of its national imprints, the establishment of national loan centres, and the personal responsibility of librarians for their stock.

Chapter 7 - Summary discussion

Objective: To highlight essential requirements for UAP, to consider the need for actions that cut across individual functions, as well as the agents of action.

Discussion: Participants are asked to confirm the scale and importance of the problem and to consider certain basic requirements as priority objectives. Comment is sought in particular on the need for national information planning and development, on the need for close co-operation between the various elements of the information community and on ways in which these may be achieved both to improve the present unsatisfactory situation and to provide for future needs. Consideration of the roles of various agents of action is also invited.

Expected results: The setting, within a context of long-term planning, of short-term objectives based on thorough research of actual needs, available resources and local conditions, taking account of the interdependence and disparate needs of the various elements of the information community, should lead to the formulation of realistic and closely argued plans capable of attainment and of having an impact within a short time scale. This would increase availability and improve the satisfaction of user demands; this in turn would generate increased use, in the light of which services can continue to be assessed and improved, increasing still further the satisfaction and generation of demand to the benefit of personal, social, educational and economic development.

Recommendations: Recommendations are made concerning the need to appreciate the scale and nature of the problem, the importance of UAP as an element of national library and information planning, the need to demonstrate the benefits of improved availability, the need for co-operation, the undertaking of research, the impact of new technologies, publicity for UAP, and the role of individual countries.

PART II

SUMMARY

Chapter 1 - Presentation on UAP

The objective of UAP is the widest possible availability of publications to intending users wherever and whenever they need them. To achieve this requires both positive action and the removal of barriers. Publication is defined as recorded knowledge issued for public use.

There are few sections of the community that do not feel some need for the availability of accurate and timely information. Publications may be collected and supplied through various channels. It is the main function of publishers, the book trade and libraries and a secondary function of many other institutions. Evidence suggests that improvements can be made at all levels.

Technology will affect the means by which availability is achieved, but the concept of UAP is permanently valid. The majority of publications are likely to be issued in conventional form for at least the 20 coming years.

The concept of UAP has developed to work towards the solution of these problems. A number of research projects have been undertaken which form a partial basis for discussion in subsequent chapters.

UAP depends upon certain basic functions and their efficient execution by the various elements of the information community. The Congress is structured primarily according to functions. Functions and elements exist in a complex symbiotic relationship. Action may be taken at various levels--national initiatives may be needed to meet international responsibilities and may also influence local decisions--and by various agents such as governments, professional associations and individual institutions and organizations.

Chapter 2 - Access and availability to users

Since the ultimate objective of UAP is to serve users by providing them with publications containing the information they require, the development of systems requires an understanding of the needs of users, both actual and potential. There are various obstacles to availability--social, educational, economic, physical and linguistic--not all of which may be subject to the control of information personnel.

Users are often not considered as part of the total information system, and they are rarely involved in the planning of systems. They are not always capable of identifying and articulating their requirements, but their support may be vital to the development and acceptance of improved services. The needs of different user groups must be assessed in the context of a country's demography, national development priorities and the resources available.

The needs of potential as well as actual users must be identified. The monitoring of formal systems, which may be bypassed because of inadequacies or for personal reasons, can give only a partial picture of need. It is necessary to know where and how failures occur. Each form of publication and transmission has its own features and it is important to identify and develop different media for different forms of matter, audiences and requirements.

A recognition of the need for developing in users skills in the handling of information resources is of relatively recent origin; but such skills are essential for the continuing process of self-education and until they are integrated into education much remedial work is necessary.

It is upon professional information personnel that the success of systems ultimately depends. Professional and managerial skills must be combined with an understanding of and receptiveness to users.

Attention must be devoted to demonstrating the value of accurate and timely information for endogenous development. Narrow professionalism harms the image of the librarian, and greater orientation of services towards users can improve planning, increase use and gain the support of users. Greater co-ordination of services, integrated with total national planning may be needed if users are to be served.

Chapter 3 - Production and supply of publications

The roles of the publisher, who decides what is to be published and in what quantity, and the bookseller responsible for the distribution of that material are crucial to UAP. Their activities and efficiency significantly affect the policies and procedures of libraries and hence their ability to satisfy users. The vast majority of production is still centred on a few countries. In many, especially developing, countries there is a lack of tradition in writing, which is largely a part-time activity. Much of what is written in these countries is published abroad, and has then to be imported into the country of the author; this process can hinder the development of local publishing.

Paper, inks and machinery are lacking in many countries. New production techniques, both for producing paper and for printing, should continue to be explored. Supplies for book manufacture should be included in economic planning by governments.

Low levels of literacy, poverty, the lack of purchasing power and the use of minority languages limit the size of markets. There is an extensive reliance on necessary imports which further restrict the base for development of local publishing. Publications should respond to the basic needs and interests of a community. Translations and adaptations can provide a partial solution. Unlicensed and uncontrolled copying, notably of complete publications, can be detrimental both to the original publisher and the development of local publishing.

In many countries distribution is the weakest link in the chain from author to reader. Rural areas in particular are served poorly or not at all. Journals, official publications, non-conventional publications, audio-visual material and ephemera and the use of electronic text present particular difficulties which need to be overcome if their potential is to be fully realized. Bibliographic control by libraries and the book trade is in great need of improvement.

Problems associated with the need to import publications include customs and excise duties, foreign currency restrictions and reliance on international communications facilities. These factors hamper the acquisition of material by libraries. Libraries are the main market for many publications, and their development, especially school and public libraries, can be a major stimulus to the growth of publishing.

The various bodies and individuals that are involved in the manufacture and dissemination of publications are often poorly co-ordinated and are often unable to identify and implement solutions to problems individually.

Chapter 4 - Acquisitions policies and practices

Both national acquisition policies and practical systems are needed in individual countries if a reasonable level of provision of publications is to be attained. Informal co-operative arrangements, though valuable, are only a partial solution. Availability must start at the local level, but if this is to be optimized, it must be supplemented in a systematic way to ensure the availability of additional material as and when needed.

National acquisition policies are also needed if individual countries are to meet their responsibilities to other countries. Each country must be able to supply its national imprints both to its own citizens and to other countries, and be able to supply to its citizens sufficient foreign material from its own resources to meet a significant and economic proportion of their needs.

Possible methods of attaining good coverage of publications in a country include: centralization or a single major resource; provision by a few central subject libraries; the provision of material on a regional basis; and decentralized provision divided systematically between a large number of libraries. Systems may be developed at a national or regional (multi-national) level.

Effective national acquisition systems require a commitment to the principle of UAP, commitment to a national acquisition policy, a planning and steering body and acceptance of its authority, a reasonable guarantee of long-term funding, the relatively unrestricted procurement of foreign publications, guides to resources, an effective interlibrary loan system, the retention of material acquired to meet future needs, and constant monitoring to ensure effectiveness.

Domestic imprints are commonly acquired by legal deposit, but the effectiveness of regulations varies greatly. Such laws do not exist in all countries; where they do exist they may be of recent origin, may not cover all forms of publication, and may not be observed by all publishers. Purchase of foreign material from local agents may be expensive, while direct purchase may not be possible because of credit and currency problems. International exchange may be limited by the amount of material available for exchange, and may involve costly and cumbersome operations.

Chapter 5 - Repository policies and planning

An essential element of UAP is the permanent availability of publications to future users, and this is one of the main roles of libraries and archives, though the degree of importance attached to it will vary. While some libraries seek to retain items they acquire, others are more concerned with the currency and usability of stock and material is commonly withdrawn and possibly discarded.

There is thus a danger that last copies of publications may be lost to a country, even to the world. This has happened in the past and the danger is increasing as the construction of library buildings fails to keep pace with the intake of new material.

Repositories may be local, regional or national. The choice may be influenced by political and geographical considerations as well as by library and user needs. Repositories may cover all subjects or cater separately for individual subjects or groups of subjects. They may serve different categories of institution. They may be passive and simply have a storage function, though this yields fewer benefits than if they are linked with an active acquisition policy, substantial loan activity and an exchange function. Co-operative repositories may be financed and administered in different ways, such as in proportion to the amount of use, size of budget and so on. Retention must be associated with a conservation policy.

Key factors include the willingness and ability of librarians to relinquish ownership of material to be stored, management capability, the issue of what and how to relegate to repositories, and the satisfaction of user needs.

There are various ways of organizing repositories, including a mandatory national policy, a national system to be used at the discretion of individual libraries, regional or local repositories, and co-operative schemes involving retention by individual libraries.

Chapter 6 - National and international interlending policies and practices

Without some machinery for making publications more widely available, UAP cannot be attained. There is therefore a need to develop policies and procedures to ensure the systematic availability of publications both within and between countries, either in the original or as copies.

No collection, indeed the total collections of no country, can be exhaustive and meet all needs. Acquisition and retention are of limited value unless material can be made available beyond the libraries that acquire it. An organized and efficient interlending system both influences demand for wider availability and is essential to achieve it. In few countries has the scale or importance of interlending been recognized. Informal co-operative arrangements afford only a partial solution. Systematic measures are needed to meet national and international responsibilities.

National interlending systems require the collection of publications, means of locating them and procedures and mechanisms for requesting and supplying them. Systems should be judged chiefly by the level of satisfaction and speed of supply they achieve and their costs. The existing situation should be analysed and performance monitored. Aspects considered include the need for interlending centres, the use of photographic and other reproductions, union catalogues and technological developments.

Systems may be national or regional; different systems may serve different categories of user or cater for different categories of material or different subjects. They may be organized in various ways, ranging from centralized to totally decentralized provision.

The requirements for international lending are essentially the same as those that apply to national interlending, except that international availability should aim at exhaustivity. Efficient international lending is impossible without efficient national systems. Each country must accept responsibility for making its own publications available to other countries, even if only as a last resort. Good national collections may be able to provide a good service at reasonable cost to other countries. Countries may decide by international agreement to establish a co-operative

lending collection, but this will face considerable financial and administrative problems, and may have little advantage over access to a few large collections or the country of publication.

Chapter 7 - Summary discussion

A considerable number of obstacles must be overcome if UAP is to be achieved. They should not be seen as unsuperable barriers but rather as a stimulus to action.

Certain basic requirements for UAP are identified. National information planning and development are needed if these are to be met. Planning should be related to goals that are attainable within a realistic time schedule and that entail moderate financial resources based on an identification of needs. Priorities should accord with local conditions.

The various elements involved in information production, provision and use exist in a symbiotic relationship and co-ordinating machinery will be needed if progress is to be made on a broad front.

Planning requires research to obtain valid and reliable data. At present much necessary information is lacking on the performance, and in particular on the costs, of systems. Future developments must also be considered at the planning stage, to ensure that systems are sufficiently flexible to accommodate growth and change. Governments exercise direct or indirect control over most aspects of UAP. Improved availability is clearly in the interests of governments. Their responsibilities are of crucial importance and must be accepted if progress is to be made. However, responsibilities do not lie only with governments. Information personnel will have to formulate and implement detailed policies, since they have the practical knowledge and experience. Professional associations can act as a forum for developing and a focus for maintaining commitment to UAP, and can ensure that the balanced needs of a profession as a whole are taken into account. Users should always be considered as part of the system and educated to derive maximum benefit from it.

PART III

MAIN WORKING DOCUMENT

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Introduction

1. In the search for information the sources that are generally consulted are publications. However, the publications needed are often not easily accessible for a number of reasons. Some of the impediments can be overcome through action on the part of governments, individuals, professional organizations and other groups with the assistance, where necessary, of international organizations (e.g. Unesco) and international non-governmental organizations (e.g. IFLA). UAP (Universal Availability of Publications) seeks to identify the constraints to access to publications and to encourage and support national and international action towards the improvement of the present situation.

2. The objective of UAP is, therefore, the widest possible availability of publications to users, wherever and whenever they need them. This can be seen as an essential element in support of the economic, social, scientific and technological development of nations and the personal development of the individual. To achieve this objective requires both positive action towards improving availability and the removal of barriers that impede availability. Such action would need to be initiated at all levels, from the national to the international, and at all stages, from the publication of new material to the assurance of the retention of copies of all publications.

The scope of UAP

3. UAP is by definition concerned with publications. Thus by definition, it excludes such items as manuscripts, and formatted information found in data banks (e.g. bibliographical files and statistical data). It should be seen as a major element in the wider concept of Universal Access to Information. It concerns most of the activities of a conventional library but only that part of the activities of a documentation centre or information service related to the collection and supply of publications.

4. A 'Publication' is defined as recorded information available for public use and thus includes printed materials (including report literature and articles in journals), audio-visual material and electronically-stored texts. Printed archives, especially record sets, are also included.

5. The term 'public use' (which should not be confused with the term 'public domain' commonly applied to official publications) allows for the possibility that restrictions may be imposed upon the availability of some publications. Certain publications of governments, industries, academic or research institutions are confidential and this confidentiality must be respected. Some of these may become available for public use after a certain number of years. Some publications may not be available because they are old, rare or fragile and if available may have limitations placed upon their use. Further universal availability must be achieved with due respect for the legitimate rights of authors, publishers and others concerned with the production and dissemination of publications.

6. UAP is therefore relevant to all involved with the production, storage, dissemination, conservation and use of publications: authors, publishers and distributors, information specialists, librarians and archivists and finally the user, the ultimate beneficiary.

The need for availability

7. The modern world relies increasingly on an adequate supply and rapid flow of information. There can be few sections of the community or individuals, regardless of their location, social condition or level of intellectual achievement, that do not feel some need for the availability of accurate, timely and useful information. Information is transmitted to these users in many ways, but publications of various kinds are still the main vehicle.

8. Users in the fields mentioned below would be beneficiaries of improved availability of publications.

(a) Education

Users in literacy programmes which help to develop and maintain the skill of literacy would be greatly assisted by availability of printed information.

Users in self-education and continuing education programmes would be better equipped to respond to rapid social changes, to solve immediate problems in their daily life and work, profit from their leisure and recreation and enrich their personal lives through an awareness of their own national cultural heritage and those of other countries.

Users in formal education programmes, such as teachers and students, would be helped to improve and extend the learning process, and to acquire a broad knowledge base which would enable them to play a full and constructive role in society.

(b) Research

Researchers in all disciplines would have easier access to the published work in their fields and avoid duplication of work and waste of resources.

(c) Industry and management

Industrialists, for the improvement of processes and products and growth in output and managers and employers for the improvement of productivity, marketing and managerial skills.

(d) Agriculture

Farmers, for the improvement of methods and productivity.

(e) Science and technology

Scientists and technologists in all fields, including medicine, for the application of science and technology in development and the improvement of health, housing and nutrition.

(f) Planning and administration

Government, officials and planners, to assist in decision making, the formulation of economic and social development plans and the use of national resources to maximum effect.

9. In addition to the above categories of users, improved availability of publications would be beneficial to:

authors, whose works will be more widely distributed;

publishers, booksellers and others concerned with the production and distribution of publications, whose markets will be extended as existing barriers are removed and demand increases;

libraries, archives and information centres, which would be able to provide better services to their users;

governments and public bodies, which would fund their literacy, educational and other programmes reinforced and a better informed population; and

all others concerned with the production and dissemination of information.

Supply of publications

10. The traditional supplier is the conventional library--national, public, academic or special--which collects publications to serve its users, who may be very large in number (as in the case of public libraries), or restricted in number and range of interests (as in the case of an industrial library). Archives are usually able to make and supply copies of documents in their collections. Documentation centres and information centres may also have substantial collections from which they provide information services and sometimes copies of items in these collections may be supplied on request to customers. The distinction between traditional libraries and documentation centres is becoming increasingly uncertain.

11. Organizations providing bibliographic services may supply copies of publications (in nearly all cases journal articles) on demand, as a back up to the references obtained through published indexing and abstracting tools or by computer searches. The service may be from their own collection, as in the case of the Institute for Scientific Information, or the organization may act as an intermediary and obtain items from other collections (usually academic or special libraries) with which it has made arrangements. Lockheed, the System Development Corporation and the European Space Agency are examples of database operators that work in this way.

12. A special type of document supplier, midway between publishers and libraries is the United States National Technical Information Service, as well as some other organizations, which acquire very large quantities of report literature, convert them to microfiche and supply copies on demand (usually in microfiche).

13. Finally, publishers themselves may supply copies of their works, not only through normal commercial channels but direct to libraries (or documentation centres) or users. Journal publishers have in the past, frequently provided offprints of articles, but supplies have been limited. In the future, articles from journals that are stored in machine-readable form may be reproduced on demand. Such facilities may be provided by individual publishers or, more probably, by a group of publishers sharing technical facilities or acting through an agent.

14. In the case of journal articles, there may be a significant shift in the next decade to on-demand supply from selected journal and report literature. These would be mainly in the European languages. Most of this material is, as noted, supplied in microform from a limited number of centres. With this exception, the

main collectors and suppliers of publications are, and will continue to be, libraries. The great majority of demands for and use of publications seems likely to be in and through libraries, which can be expected to adapt to and make use of the new information technology. The gradual erosion of distinctions between the various kinds of suppliers will almost certainly accelerate, with publishers taking on some of the roles of libraries and vice versa, and with increasing contact and co-operation between the sectors.

Areas for improvement

15. The growing recognition by many of the vital importance of information for all aspects of development is only one of a number of factors responsible for an increase in the demand for publications. Other factors inlcude the continuing growth in the number of publications and the expansion of educational programmes, both formal and informal, all over the world.

16. Users searching for information on a particular subject need to know what has been written, where it has been published and in what form. To meet these needs much attention has been focused on improvements to bibliographic control. IFLA, with the support of Unesco, has been at the forefront of these developments. Its programme of Universal Bibliographic Control (UBC) aims 'to make universally and promptly available, in a form which is internationally acceptable, basic bibliographic data on all publications issued in all countries'. Although much remains to be done, there have already been substantial improvements in bibliographic control in the last two decades in coverage, in quality and in modes and speed of access. These improvements have inevitably led to a greater demand for publications, yet the supply of publications has lagged behind bibliographic access. This gap needs to be closed. UAP aims at ensuring that access to bibliographic information on publications is matched by the availability of the publications themselves. UAP is thus the logical and necessary complement to UBC.

17. Unesco has within its own programmes and over a long period of time initiated and assisted activities related to access to publications. Within the NATIS concept and the UNISIST Programme, Unesco has tried to improve among its Member States and in the international community at large, information transfer in general and its corollary, access to publications. For instance, one of the objectives of the UNISIST programme is to 'facilitate the access of scientists, engineers and technologists to published information'.[1] Among the various themes of the first Medium Term Plan, theme 5/10.1/03, Development of information infrastructure was particularly concerned with the development of libraries and information services whose main role is to provide access to publications.

18. Following a recommendation of the UNISIST II Conference,[2] a pilot project on document delivery services in which a number of Latin American countries will co-operate has been launched. The project will utilize microforms and a coupon system to facilitate distribution of documents and is expected to provide useful results

1. 17 C/5, paragraph 572. Resolution 2.131.
2. Intergovernmental Conference on Scientific and Technological Information for Development, UNISIST II, Paris, 28 May-1June 1979. Final Report. Paris: Unesco, 1979, p. 22.

for possible application in other regions of the world. Document availability and delivery services hold an important place in the next medium-term plan[1] where the main thrust of the General Information Programme is to improve transfer and utilization of information. Among the three main 'programmes' which make up the proposed action in this area, the second is thus formulated: 'Improve access to information and its utilization by all concerned with development by means of measures designed to reduce obstacles to its free flow'. This programme includes three subprogramming units, one of which reads: 'pursue and intensify actions undertaken with a view of limiting obstacles to the availability of documents'. These examples show clearly Unesco's concern with access to publications, a concern which is shared by several non-governmental organizations, among which IFLA plays a prominent role.

19. Making publications available in response to demand is an important function of publishers, the book trade and libraries; it is also a secondary function of many other institutions such as documentation centres and information services. It appears that improvements can be made in all these areas to increase availability and serve better the needs of the user.

20. The publisher, by selecting from unsolicited contributions and commissioning others, is responsible for the quality and quantity of works that are published. He also publicizes, markets and disseminates the published works. In many countries publicity is inadequate and individuals and institutions are often unable to identify potentially useful materials. Delivery from publishers to the users can be very slow, sometimes taking many months. In no country can the indigenous publishing industry meet the needs of all sections of the population (nor should it attempt to do so). However, in some countries there is too extensive a reliance on imported material presenting additional problems like customs formalities, import and currency controls, resulting in further delays.

21. Booksellers supply both the public as well as libraries and other information services. It is observed, however, that in many countries channels for the distribution and sale of national imprints and imported publications fail to reach large sections of the community, particularly those living in rural areas.

22. The availability of publications can be assured mainly through libraries. In many countries a significant percentage of the population has no, or very inadequate, access to libraries or other form of information service. Availability must begin at the local level and the role of local library services in improving availability is crucial. It should be noted that even the largest libraries, with good levels of funding, can acquire only a fraction of world output. Increases in the cost of publications and overhead costs and the resulting decline in the purchasing power of many libraries means that their ability to meet the growing needs of their users is continually being reduced. A continuous supply of local and foreign publications should be ensured to enable sufficiently high coverage at the national level. The responsibility for acquiring national imprints for providing for future national and international demand must lie with the country of publication. Sufficient foreign material to meet a significant proportion of demand should also be acquired. While it is recognized that there are economic factors involved in the acquisition of publications the staffing necessary for processing them and the accommodation to house them, the situation in many countries falls far short of requirements.

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1. Recommendations concerning the Second Medium-Term Plan with regard to the General Information Programme. Report of the Secretariat. Paris: Unesco, 1981 (PGI-81/COUNCIL/III/6).

23. As no organization can meet all information needs of its users from its own resources, means must be devised for obtaining the required publications from elsewhere. National systems for the supply of publications between organizations--interlending systems--are therefore required. Interlending has seen a substantial increase in recent years, but only in few countries has serious and systematic attention been paid to it. In most countries a high proportion of needs that cannot be met locally are either not satisfied or delays are often unacceptably long. For these reasons, demand itself is constrained by low expectations.

24. Just as no library can meet all the demands placed upon it, no country can be self-sufficient in information provision; international availability must therefore be improved. In principle, every country should be in a position to supply its own publications to any other country in the world.

25. To achieve this it is essential that publications be retained to meet future needs, this being one of the main roles of libraries and archives. Unfortunately, it is known that some publications may be used to the point when they are worn out, while lack of accommodation is leading many libraries to dispose of material. This presents a serious danger that some publications may be permanently lost to a country, and even to the world, something which has happened extensively in the past. Provision must therefore be made for ensuring that 'last copies' are retained and conserved.

26. Availability is at present far from universal; many publications are very hard to obtain, and many people have very limited access to publications. Demand, at present constrained in many countries by poor supply, will continue to increase, especially in developing countries. If existing systems and procedures cannot cope adequately now, they will be even less able to cope in the future. Immediate and continuing action needs to be taken to accommodate demands which could be expected to increase both in volume and complexity.

The future role of technology

27. A key question is whether the future production and dissemination of publications will be so radically affected by technology that any plan of action that is at present conceived will soon be overtaken by developments. Technology will undoubtedly affect the means by which availability is achieved, but it is important to emphasize that the concept of UAP is one that is permanently valid. The ways of attaining it may be modified in the light of changing circumstances and with the benefit of changing technology.

28. Electronic technology is developing fast and exciting possibilities are opening up for the future storage and transmission of publications. It is technically possible to store text in machine-readable form, of which the videodisc currently appears to offer the greatest promise, and transmit it over telephone or dedicated lines to remote terminals at which it can be read or printed out. Printed text can be captured for electronic storage of this kind, and laser printers can produce high quality prints at high speed and increasingly low cost.

29. The economics of data capture, storage, transmission and printing are still highly uncertain, even in developed countries, and worldwide extension of the technology is unlikely to take place for some years. Moreover it seems likely that the application of this technology will be limited mainly to journals, especially scientific and technical journals, and that for many of these the electronic version will exist side by side with conventional printed versions. Electronic technology

can be used in a more limited way to store journals and print out articles on demand for transmission by mail or other conventional ways; this could give the publisher an increased role in the supply of publications. On-line transmission to remote terminals where it occurs is likely to be mostly to libraries and other institutions, since laser printers will be beyond the reach of most individuals and small organizations.

30. Although prediction for more than a few years ahead is impossible, it seems likely that libraries and other information services will have a continuing role not only in the supply of conventional publications, which will still be produced in very large quantities, but also in the provision of electronically transmitted texts. A recent Delphi study[1] yielded the following forecasts:

> by the year 2000, 50 per cent of existing indexing/abstracting services will be available only in electronic form. The 90 per cent level of conversion will not be reached until later;
>
> existing periodicals (in science and technology, social sciences and the humanities) will not reach even the 25 per cent level of conversion until after 2000;
>
> by 1990, 25 per cent of existing reference books will only be available in electronic form. The 50 per cent level of conversion will only occur after 2000;
>
> by 1995, 50 per cent of newly issued technical reports will only be available in electronic form. The 90 per cent level will be reached after 2000.

When it is considered that these comments refer only to research literature, they reinforce the view that the vast majority of publications will continue to appear in conventional form for at least 20 years from now.

The development of the concept of UAP

31. The concept of UAP was first enunciated within IFLA in 1973 and has subsequently been developed to work towards the solution of the above problems. Unesco has taken a keen interest in its development, and recognized it formally in its Programme and Budget 1979-1980. Unesco's interest is evidenced not only by its sponsorship of this Congress, but also by its support for a number of relevant research projects. Until recently most activity in connection with the Congress has taken place within IFLA. However, since UAP goes well beyond the sphere of libraries, publishers, booksellers, archivists and other information personnel and users have been brought into discussions and contributed in particular to the preparation of material for this Congress.

32. In order to assess the present situation on availability of publications, identify problems, obtain relevant information and analyse possible solutions, research projects in the following areas were undertaken:

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1. Lancaster, F.W., Drasgow, L. and Marks, E. The impact of a paperless society on the research library of the future. Final report to the National Science Foundation (Urbana, Il; University of Illinois, Graduate School of Library Science, 1980).

the supply of publications through commercial channels to libraries;

national acquisition policies and programmes: a comparative study;

national interlending systems: a comparative study;

the international provision and supply of publications;

the permanent retention of material by libraries;

the availability of publications in individual countries: a pilot study.

The findings of these projects, which themselves take account of a wide range of relevant studies and activities undertaken by Unesco and other organizations, form much of the basis for discussions in the following sessions. Summaries of the results of the research projects are to be found in a background document (PGI-82/UAP/3).

33. Three other research studies are worth mentioning. Two of them are concerned with special types of publications; official publications and United Nations publications. The first is being carried out by IFLA and will attempt to answer three questions: how good and complete are the national collections of official publications, how accessible are they to different types of users and what use is the information contained in them for the needs of the country. The second is conducted in collaboration with Unesco and the Dag Hammarskjöld Library of the United Nations in New York and deals with the same problems as above but confined to United Nations publications. Both studies are expected to be completed before the end of 1982. The third study, which is now completed, was carried out by a team of information specialists under an agreement between the Interim Fund for Science and Technology for Development, Unesco and the governments concerned (8 countries were covered). Although its main concern was information provision and use in developing countries, much of the data gathered is pertinent to UAP and will be discussed later in this document.[1]

34. In the research and other work that has been undertaken in preparation for the Congress, it has become clear that while problems on the availability of publications are evident, statistical data for determining the extent of the problem has often been wanting. Only a few countries or organizations have up to now conducted, or felt it necessary to conduct, studies relating to the problem.

35. It is not claimed that the research conducted is complete or exhaustive, but it nevertheless deals with the major aspects of UAP. Further studies may be necessary, many of which might be identified as a result of the discussions at the Congress. If research is considered as constituting the First Phase of this activity, the holding of this Congress would be the Second Phase. This is devoted to an examination of the findings of the research and the consideration of solutions based on discussions and consensus. A possible Third Phase would be the follow-up of the recommendations of the Congress by the initiating of action at national and international levels on the basis of the recommendations.

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1. Science and Technology Information: Analytical case studies. Executive Summary Report. Paris: Unesco, 1981
(PGI-81/COUNCIL III/INF.5)

The dimensions of UAP and the structure of the Congress

36. In the preparation of the Congress, attention was given to determining the most appropriate approach to the problems of UAP. Several possibilities were discussed:

1. By functions: e.g. publishing, the distribution of publications, acquisition by purchase, exchange, gift and other means, the lending of publications, either in the original or, within the terms of prevailing copyright legislation, as copies, and the retention of publications to meet future needs.

2. By levels: local, regional (within countries), national, international (both regional and worldwide).

3. By institutions: individual organizations, local (state) governments, (national and international), international associations and organizations.

These are of course interrelated. Action taken at one level will influence action at another level, and actions by one institution may affect actions by other institutions. Functions are also closely interrelated: policies relating, for example, to national interlending systems are closely linked with acquisition and retention policies.

37. It follows from the identification of needs and deficiencies that improvements to availability depend upon the efficient execution of certain functions by relevant sections of the information community. The work of the Congress is structured primarily by this approach. In each of the sessions the need for action is presented, the elements of each function are identified, requirements are analysed especially in terms of the problems to be overcome, and necessary action and possible solutions are suggested. Participants are invited to comment on all these aspects. The better performance of these functions has as its aim the improved availability of publications to meet the needs of users. Users must therefore be considered as an integral part of the total system: functions cannot be treated in isolation from those they are intended to serve. Users can make a valuable contribution to recognizing the need for and assessing the suitability of a programme of action.

38. There is a danger when functions are treated as separate activities that interrelationships between them and between levels and agents of action may not receive due emphasis. The relationships between functions may be stated in simplified terms thus:

> Publishers and booksellers distribute material to individuals and to libraries and other information services. The latter constitute the main or even the sole market for some publications and undoubtedly extend the market for others. The activities and efficiency of the book trade affect the ability of libraries and other information services to acquire material. Publishers would, in addition, wish to exercise some control over the multiple use of their products. Publications acquired and stored by a library must often be supplemented by other indigenous and foreign materials to meet the needs of its users. Interlending is therefore required. An interlending system may be largely determined by existing acquisition policies, or may itself determine those policies.

Few libraries and information services can expect to retain all the publications they have acquired (some perhaps as part of a national acquisitions policy). Their retention within countries to meet possible future needs must be planned systematically, without compromising their availability for future interlending.

39. Levels of action are similarly complex. National initiatives may be needed to meet international responsibilities, international compatibility between systems and procedures may be needed, special strengths in one country may be relied upon by neighbouring countries, and in particular, developing countries will have to rely upon services offered by developed countries until their own situation improves. National initiatives will in turn influence local decisions. For example, a national acquisition policy may require individual institutions to collect particular categories of material, and the establishment of national interlending collections may require individual institutions to concentrate more on meeting specifically local needs.

40. Improved availability of publications is of special interest to developing countries, where, in general, indigenous publishing is poorly developed, distribution channels are inadequate and libraries and information centres receive little financial support. However, availability is also of great importance to developed countries because, although their institutions are generally well funded the demands on them are greater. In fact, several developed countries are at present considering, as a matter of some urgency, the means of improving document provision. In view of the great disparity in the situation of the developed and developing countries, the latter will inevitably depend very heavily for some years to come on the former. Improved availability of publications in developed countries is therefore necessary if they are to improve services to their own clientele as well as serve the needs of the developing countries.

41. Availability is also to some extent influenced by governments. Governments may exercise some control over the material published within a country. Financial restrictions imposed by governments may affect the ability of booksellers to buy foreign material, and of libraries to use the services of foreign libraries. Government policy may directly affect the provision of library and information services and budgetary allocations may largely determine their extent and efficiency. Government policy may also determine the structure of the communications network needed to support availability.

42. Professional and learned associations can ensure that their professional interests as a whole are taken into account when national policies and plans are formulated. Their corporate voice can act as a strong influence when representations are made for the improvement of services. The translation of policy into action will fall upon information professionals. Benefits of such action would be reaped by individual institutions and organizations but the symbiotic relationship between publishers, booksellers and libraries will ensure beneficial effects to them as well. Co-operation and co-ordination between various institutions and sectors of the information community may be needed if progress is to be made on a broad front. Their professional associations should get together to consider common action towards improved availability through professional co-operation and through influencing governments to provide greater support where this is needed.

43. It is the task of this Congress to consider the basic elements of UAP, the actions necessary for the achievement of this goal and the obligations and responsibilities of the agents of these actions.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

44. The ultimate objective of the UAP programme is to serve users. Book supply, acquisition, interlending and retention for continuing use are all means to the end of providing users with publications containing the information they require. Thus, the chain of availability begins with authors and ends with users. The development of effective systems for ensuring access and availability requires a basic understanding of the needs of the population as a whole and must be designed to serve subsets of the population according to established priorities. As a priority activity, information resources vital to the development of a country must be identified and effectively organized for use. However, every individual in a country should be considered a potential user and attention must also be paid to his requirements.

Definition of 'user'

45. The word 'user' which includes also the 'potential user' applies to all potential beneficiaries of a national information system--in effect, the vast majority of a population. The range of users and their needs is well expressed in the following statement.

'Users are individuals, each with unique informational, educational, psychological and social needs. A person may need 'practical knowledge' to solve immediate problems in his daily life and work. He may need 'professional knowledge' to further his continuing education. Or he may need 'intellectual knowledge', the kind that furthers his understanding of the arts, humanities and sciences, and which enriches his personal life. Reading for pleasure, pursuing an innovative idea or exploring knowledge just to satisfy one's innate curiosity, are other valid motives for reading, listening or looking. In addition, people feel the need for ethical, religious and philosophical insights. Organizations, like individuals, need information and knowledge. Business organizations need facts and data to forecast a market, develop a new product or adapt a new technology. Schools need information to improve and extend the learning process. Research organizations need information to synthesize new data with known facts as part of the creative process. Government needs information at every level to formulate plans, refine decision making, and help government workers to anticipate and resolve problems. It is clear that library and information needs are felt at all levels of society, regardless of an individual's location, social condition, or level of intellectual achievement. Although library and information needs... vary widely among people by age, ethnic origin, educational achievement, work assignment, geographic location, and many other factors, most people feel some dependence on the availability of accurate and useful information'.[1]

46. It is worth drawing special attention here to the mention in the statement above of government as a major user of information. This is particularly significant since much of the support needed for the improvement of availability must come, directly or indirectly, from government sources.

47. One of the recommendations of the UNISIST II Conference states that Unesco should, in its future information programme: 'continue to implement the UNISIST programme (...) by strengthening a user-oriented strategy, taking into

1. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (USA). Toward a national program for library and information services: goals for action. Washington D.C.: National Commission on Libraries and Information Science, 1975.

account the needs of all potential users, such as scientific and technical communities, development planners, educators, professionals, technicians, local workers as well as others who participate in the process of development'.[1]

Obstacles to availability

48. While all publications should be as widely available to users as possible, decisions with regard to availability do not always rest with suppliers or intermediaries such as librarians. As noted in Chapter 1, some works are confidential and thus unavailable while old, rare and fragile publications may be available only under certain conditions.

49. There are numerous obstacles to availability other than those intrinsic to the publications themselves. Some of the obstacles are social or educational. Many potential users, whose lives could be enriched in various practical and cultural ways by access to published works, lack the motivation to seek access to knowledge through publications because their education has been inadequate to enable them to read, because of social conditioning or because the benefits that would accrue are not obvious. Practical day to day needs such as food, clothing and shelter clearly have to take priority and the pursuit of these deprives individuals of opportunities for longer term improvement. Even at a more advanced educational level, there may be less motivation to be comprehensively informed especially in conditions where competition is less intensive. It may also happen that where users are motivated they may not receive the information they are seeking due to lack of knowledge of the existence of the information system or of how it operates.

50. Economic factors also inhibit access to publications. Funds needed to buy books for a library or for an individual user, for travelling for the purpose of consulting publications which are known to be available or for paying for the cost of photocopying and postage of journal articles are often particularly in the developing countries, not available or in short supply.

51. Physical obstacles include distance, especially for people in rural areas. Such obstacles are even greater for people whose mobility is reduced by physical or other handicap. These are discussed in the following section. Other forms of handicap such as deafness or, in particular, blindness, also constitute severe barriers to availability.

52. Language could also be a barrier. Even the few 'world languages' by no means offer access to all necessary or desired information. It is more serious in the case of people who speak minority languages--viz. languages which may be spoken only by relatively few even within a country, and which may not be used at all for published works. They may be barred from access to nearly all of the world's publications. Aural and visual media and translations may be able to reach such people.

53. Some of the obstacles to availability indicated above are beyond the scope of UAP, which is concerned with the availability of publications once produced, but they illustrate the close connection between UAP and wider social, economic and

1. Intergovernmental Conference on Scientific and Technical Information for Development UNISIST II, Paris, 28 May-1 June 1979. Final Report. Paris: Unesco, 1979 (PGI/MD/1).

educational concepts. Obstacles specific to the UAP concept are considered more fully in the following chapters. Indeed, a UAP programme of action can be seen mainly as a means to overcoming these obstacles.

The need for user support

54. Libraries and other information sources, both individually and collectively, play the major role in the transfer of information to users. Although users are concerned that they often cannot obtain the publications they want at the time they want them, few are aware of the benefits they would derive from an improved service or of ways in which better services could be established. Frequently users do not make requests for publications they need because they expect that they would not be available, or if at all available, only after long delays.

55. It is of little advantage to establish a system, even one backed by national legislation, if it does not work to the satisfaction of users. Users need therefore to be kept informed of the problems encountered in the operation of the system, the available possibilities for improvement, the existing constraints and the means of overcoming them, and ways in which users could help to ensure better support and services. The active support of users, especially of learned and professional bodies and those working in industry, may be vital to the development of a system of improved availability.

56. Unfortunately, with few exceptions, users are rarely involved or even consulted in the initial planning and design of systems. Information systems are often planned and designed by documentalists, librarians, archivists and other information specialists. The responsibility for promoting the idea, and later planning and implementation of information systems, falls on them. They may however have little practical experience in the analysis of needs of the users of these systems. It is essential that system planners and designers take these into consideration giving also some allowance for anticipated needs.

Prerequisites to user studies

57. Generally speaking, user studies have to date been confined to fairly small subsets of the population and to well-defined subject areas; many have been purely local or institutional. No accepted methodology currently exists for surveying and projecting user needs across an entire population, although Unesco has commissioned and published pilot guidelines which treat this problem.[1]

58. An assessment of these needs presupposes detailed information on a country's demography, population characteristics, direction of future growth and so on. While the use of demographic data for planning health or transportation systems is common, this is not so in the case of the long-range planning of libraries, archives and other information services or institutions. Such data provide an essential foundation on which to build systems and a framework for setting priorities, making decisions and taking action. Verifiable facts and figures enable planners to weigh alternative courses of action logically, and provide a sound and valid basis on which to justify recommendations to governments.

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1. Guidelines on studies of information users (Pilot version). Paris: Unesco, 1981 (PGI/81/WS/2)

Categories of user

59. The key to successful systems design is the setting of objectives, and one element in this is the correct identification of user groups. A library or information centre can be successful only if it has identified its users and their needs adequately. Needs for information may have to be assessed before needs for publications can be identified.

60. The first and most obvious group consists of the users of existing libraries and information services. It is relatively easy to analyse their demands, the extent to which they are satisfied and their reactions to the existing services. Unfortunately it is much harder to assess their needs. Many needs are not articulated into demands, and some may not even be felt by the user; it is a common experience to recognize an information need only when the means for its satisfaction are made available.

61. In studies of information requirements, it is usual to group users according to some major characteristic. The characteristic chosen will depend on local circumstances, but it may be a subject field, the organization for which individuals work, or the nature of their work. The needs, for example, of doctors working in the field are very different from those of hospital personnel or of medical researchers. A multidimensional framework of characteristics may be necessary in the case of libraries serving a broad clientele.

62. This variety of needs may be exemplified by looking at different functions within the same discipline. The agricultural policy maker, concerned with the allocation of resources, requires digests of statistics--production, consumption, and so on. The administrator is responsible for converting the policy makers' decisions into procedures, and possibly also for the collection of data and for the preparation of digests for use by policy makers. His information needs are both prescriptive and related to day to day administration. The researcher requires information on research carried out elsewhere and detailed knowledge of his own national or local situation to enable him to apply the expertise gleaned from other locations. He may undertake experiments and produce research reports of use to administrators, teachers and practitioners. The teacher must draw on the results of research and practice; journals and books enable him to keep up to date. The student obtains information from his teacher and from textbooks, usually recommended by the teacher. The practitioner relies on the knowledge gained as a student and on his accumulated experience. He needs manuals and guides, especially when introducing new methods, in order to reinforce any instructions he may have received from agricultural liaison officers. Similar schemes may be drawn for different functions in other disciplines and various environments.[1]

Assessing information needs

63. Once groups of information users have been categorized for purposes of national planning, their needs for information must be assessed in more detail. It will be necessary to set priorities in accordance with the national plan for economic and social development and to make some realistic assessment of the resources that are likely to be available to implement changes and additions to

1. See also: Intergovernmental Conference on Scientific and Technological Information for Development (UNISIST II). Paris, 28 May-1 June 1979. Main Working Document. Paris: Unesco, 1979 (PGI/UNISIST II/4)

existing information facilities. It will then be possible to determine what data must be collected and to organize investigations accordingly. The data to be gathered should relate to services that it will be possible to improve or introduce within a few years. The methods of data collection chosen must be both valid and practical, in relation both to the data to be collected and the resources available for its collection, and to the people whose needs are being surveyed.

Potential users

64. Since use of information resources is often very low in countries with underdeveloped information services, some effort must be made to provide data on potential users as well as on the unstated needs of existing users. Also as there are many ways of obtaining and using information, the monitoring of formal systems such as libraries can give only a partial picture of need. It should be determined whether reasons for not using a service are personal, are due to unawareness of the existence of a service, or are due to imperfections in the service that can be remedied. It may well be that no suitable service exists at all.

65. It is rarely useful to ask a potential user in general terms what sort of service he wants or whether he would use a hypothetical service, unless he is already aware of what services might be provided. Very few people can specify their information or library requirements in the abstract. Further, the failure of an information supply system to provide for the needs of a client is not as a rule evident. Potential users rarely keep records of the failures of systems to supply needed information yet it is such failures that condition people as to what they may expect in response to a request. If the potential user thinks a service is unlikely to supply the information he needs, he does not even try to obtain it.

66. For instance, one of the main results of a study conducted by Unesco[1] is that information systems are under-utilized. The report states: 'By far, the most important (problem) is the low use of information to support national development efforts and the need to shift emphasis significantly from increasing the supply of information to problems of use and demand'. This result is interesting to note, if we keep in mind that the target user group was planners, economists, administrators and sectoral users involved in the formulation and implementation of national plans. The study has identified various factors which have led to this situation, among which the lack of practical orientation of information services, lack of motivation of this user group, lack of marketing and guidance and finally of evaluation of such services.

67. Non-users include not only those who are unaware of services, do not have access to them, do not know how to use them, or have no confidence in them, but those who do not know that they need information. The last category is ultimately a problem for the education system. The other problems need to be dealt with by suitable publicity, the convenient siting of appropriate information resources (including also mobile libraries that travel to users), instruction in use, and the improvement of existing services or the creation of new ones. Supply creates demand, and this requires that users get what they want.

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1. Science and Technology Information: Analytical Case Studies. Executive Summary. Paris: Unesco, 1981 (PGI-81/COUNCIL/III/INF.5).

68. Improvement of services requires in some cases, a major investment in information resources. In others it can be achieved by better organization and management. For example a study carried out in the United Kingdom[1] has shown that a large proportion of the material sought by users and which they had failed to locate was in fact on the shelves. Failure to check the shelves for the required material would have led to the belief that inadequacy of stock was the main cause of failure. In academic institutions a major factor in the unavailability of materials is heavy demand. Duplication of items which are identified as being of interest to an unusually large number of users would help to improve the situation.

69. It is often possible to increase availability substantially without a large increase in costs. Such action will have to be based upon surveys which will indicate where and how failures occur. In the past, librarians had a tendency to concentrate their efforts on enlarging their collections rather than on provision of the services and the satisfaction of user needs. A change in attitudes has certainly helped in the improvement of availability and will have great significance in this programme.

The handicapped user

70. As noted earlier, physical and other handicaps can constitute a major barrier to availability. The problems posed by limited mobility can be to a large extent overcome by bringing publications to users by means of loans or photocopies rather than insisting that users come to booksellers or libraries or information services. Communications technology may in due course almost entirely eliminate this barrier.

71. Some handicaps, such as deafness and blindness, make the use of some kinds of information media impossible and additional or substitute media have to be provided. Sound films may be replaced by films with subtitles for the deaf, and the printed page by braille or 'talking books' for the blind. The partially sighted or old can often be supplied with large type books or magnifying equipment. However, all these solutions require money and in developing countires in particular, very little money is available for such purposes. Economic obstacles are an important factor in the availability of publications to the handicapped.

72. The same applies to forms of physical handicap that prevent not only the movement of users to publications but their ability to handle books or other media. Special handling or projection equipment may be needed in such cases.

73. Mental handicap may or may not be associated with various forms of physical handicap. At its worst there may be an inability to profit from any form of published material. Special forms of publication, possibly somewhat similar to those produced for children, may be required.

74. One general point is worth emphasizing. Nearly all handicapped people are prevented from taking part in many other human activities, physical or social, and they may also have much more time on their hands than those without disabilities. The availability of publications is therefore extremely important to their daily lives helping to make them more bearable and perhaps enjoyable, as well as enabling

1. Urquhart, D.J. and Irving, A. Access to libraries: a study in methodology. (British Library Research and Development Department. Report No. 5431). Loughborough University: Department of Library and Information Studies, 1978.

them to educate themselves and sometimes to work for their living. In addition to publications, non-conventional media such as sound recordings and films, also assume special importance for the handicapped.

Non-conventional media and the user

75. The printed page, whatever its limitations, has the immense advantage that it can be distributed anywhere and carried anywhere. The essential feature is that its use requires no equipment.

Audiovisual media

76. Audiovisual media obviously have limitations as to where and how they can be used. Some of the limitations imposed by equipment have been greatly reduced for example by small portable sound cassette players. Advances in other areas can be expected though they are unlikely to be as great; for example video-recordings, even if the equipment for playing them could be similarly miniaturized, would require more space for adequate viewing.

Microform

77. Of special interest as a surrogate for the printed page, microforms have been produced and used for several decades. However, except when applied for the purpose of consultation of publications (e.g.: of reference works) they have generally proved unpopular, despite their obvious advantages of being cheap and compact. The main obstacles have proved to be the problem of combining portability of reading devices with reasonable readability and low cost, the difficulty of rapid scanning and extraction of relevant information when compared with the printed page, and the unattractiveness of the medium for continuous reading. Microforms are thus neither suited to leisure reading nor ideal for continuous use.

Electronic texts

78. Some of these problems may be faced with text transmitted electronically for reading on a computer terminal. It seems likely, however, that at least for the immediate future, both microforms and online access will be used mainly for transfer of certain types of information but not as a general substitute for the printed page, which will for some time at least be the prime medium of communication of text. Indeed, it is likely that electronic transmission will be used as much to produce printed matter at the receiving end as for online reading.

The appropriate use of different media

79. Each form of publication and transmission has its special features, and it is important that these are properly exploited for the most appropriate purpose. No one medium can serve all purposes, and an important task is the identification and development of different media for different materials users and needs.

Education in the use of information resources

80. There is a well established and widespread belief among librarians that it is necessary for their users to be trained or instructed in the use of libraries. However, it is only in the last decade or two that the concept of user education has been broadened and has come to be regarded as a process of developing proficiency in the use of information resources, and incidentally, as a means of obtaining feedback on the use and performance of libraries and information services.

It is now recognized that the ability to use information resources is essential to the continuing process of self-education and that the development of this proficiency should therefore be an integral part of the whole education process from the earliest stages. However, much work on these lines is still necessary in secondary schools, higher education institutions and libraries of all kinds to bring users up to a reasonable level of competence in information use.

81. The general aims and objectives for a programme aimed at educating users should include: facilitating use of local information resources; developing an awareness of and ability to exploit national information resources; and, an independent approach to information seeking. More precise aims and objectives may be formulated for particular institutions such as universities or industrial information units. Professional staff in libraries in colleges and universities, preferably with the close co-operation of academic staff can, and often do, direct new students in the use of the library, its resources and services. A public library which must cater for a wider range of individual requirements and where new users do not arrive in large groups at a given time would have to adopt a different procedure for the education of its users. In schools, teacher librarians and school librarians have a special responsibility of promoting information use as a part of the education process.[1]

The importance of professionals

82. It is upon professional information personnel that the success of systems ultimately depends. Information professionals should have a knowledge as complete as possible of available national and international resources and facilities and the means of exploiting these to serve their users. An understanding of users and a receptiveness to their expressed needs must be combined with professional skills and management abilitites. Both education and experience are necessary to develop these capacities. The technical and managerial aspects of information service are considered in other chapters. It is the aim here to consider attitudes.

Professional education

83. Ends must determine needs. Yet much professional education for library and information work appears still to be concerned more with training in skills such as cataloguing and classification than in preparation for working with users and providing for their needs. The concepts of use and availability are rarely explicitly stated, nor are the skills that are taught always or necessarily the most appropriate for the ends with which users are primarily concerned.

1. See: Education and training of users of scientific and technical information: UNISIST guide for teachers. Paris: Unesco 1977.

Evaluation of libraries and information services

84. A related problem concerns the difficulty of estimating impact of services provided by libraries and information centres in financial terms. There are no recognized parameters by which the services rendered by them can be measured and no objective method for evaluating their effectiveness. Hence it is difficult to know whether available financial resources are being used to the best advantage, yet when resources are scarce, evaluation of services is indispensable.[1]

85. It was recommended in the Working Document of UNISIST II that surveys and case studies be undertaken to produce firm evidence of the ways in which information has been used (a) to minimize duplication of effort, (b) to bring financial rewards from timely information (c) to open up new lines of work and other innovations and (d) to support and enhance endogenous development.

86. Although evaluation of information services is difficult, the policies, objectives and structure of a functioning information service may be at least partly determined by user assessment. For example, the nature and type of records of the holdings of a library or information centre should be decided in the light of user behaviour and preferences. The allocation of resources to the various services of a functioning centre should also be determined on the basis of this criterion.

The need for user orientation

87. Narrow professionalism may have harmed the public image of the information professional particularly the librarian, and hence affected the use of information institutions. Greater orientation of information services towards users could help to promote and increase information use, and also gain the support of users. For instance, the UNISIST II Conference recommended that 'increased emphasis should be placed on the repackaging of information in appropriate forms and in the local languages for the many different kinds of users in development activities'.

National planning of information services

88. The national planning of information services is an essential requirement for improved availability. In many countries libraries and information centres are financed from different sources although, in general, most are financed directly or indirectly from the public purse. This 'autonomy' which some institutions enjoy can be wasteful, and can be a handicap to the development of an optimal total system of information provision. Greater co-ordination, even if some autonomy is lost in the process, is desirable if users are to be adequately served.

89. Finally, since information services are an essential service to the population--as essential as communication and transport systems--their national development should be integrated with national planning, the more especially as other parts of a national plan will require information of various kinds for their implementation.

1. See: Lancaster, F.W. Guidelines for the evaluation of information systems and services. Paris: Unesco, 1978. (PGI-78/WS/18).

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. In order to provide a sound basis which would ensure access and availability to publications for all categories of users it is recommended that national planning of library and information services based on the needs of users of information be undertaken in all Member States.

2. Intensive and continuing research should be undertaken on the information needs of users in different disciplines and at different academic levels.

3. The education of information users should be integrated into formal education programmes at all levels, from primary education upwards. Information, and where necessary training, should be available to all users on the various possibilities of access to publications and information, and how they could be exploited.

4. As many access points as possible should be established to enable users to establish contact with the services available for providing their needs.

5. New techniques of user education should be developed.

6. Information personnel should examine ways of promoting use of their information resources and services and develop through research improved methods and techniques for motivating users and potential users of information.

7. Information personnel should consider information resources entrusted to their care as part of the total national resource and be conscious of their responsibility to users of publications and information.

8. The professional education of information personnel should be aimed at improving availability in response to needs and in developing the skills necessary to achieve this.

9. Special attention should be paid to the particular needs of the handicapped and available technologies should be utilized, wherever possible, to overcome the physical obstacles faced by them in their quest for access to information.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

90. Publications constitute one of the most significant means of transmitting information. The publisher is responsible for the quantity and quality of works that are published; he also markets and disseminates the published works. Booksellers and other distribution agents supply the public direct and also serve libraries. Some material may be obtained direct from publishers, but the majority of acquisitions involve the participation of both. Thus their roles are of fundamental importance for the availability of publications. Both libraries and other information services, which may also obtain some material by gift and exchange, and individuals are heavily dependent on the products and services of publishers, booksellers and other distribution agencies.

91. Libraries and other information services constitute an important, often the main, market for many published works, and they are the principal means for ensuring continuing availability of out of print material. The quantity and quality of published material, the efficiency of the trade in making it available, and the price at which it can be obtained, significantly affect the acquisition policies and procedures of libraries and their ability to satisfy users. In no country can the indigenous publishing industry meet all the needs of all sections of the population, and in very few countries can it even meet most of the needs of the majority. These basic facts underline the interdependence and internationality of the various elements of the book world, and the need for each to flourish to promote the widest possible availability of knowledge and information. 'A sound publishing industry is essential to national development.'[1]

92. UAP is concerned with the availability of material once it has been published. This chapter therefore concentrates primarily on distribution. However, some aspects of authorship, publishing and associated problems affect availability and are therefore relevant to the discussions at this International Congress while other aspects are of direct relevance to the World Book Congress. Distribution patterns, methods and problems are inextricably bound up with the nature and level of publishing in individual countries and the distribution of publishing activity throughout the world. Considering world book production six countries account for more than 50 per cent of the titles produced, and 16 countries for 75 per cent;[2] there is a similar concentration of journal production in a small number of countries. Special attention must therefore be paid, particularly to the developing countries, where the publishing industry is poorly developed and the need for publications is met to a large degree through imports. A number of factors which play a role in creating the situation and which are common to developing and some developed countries can be identified though their relative importance varies from country to country.[3]

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1. Charter of the Book: Article IV.
2. Unesco Statistical Yearbook 1980. Paris: Unesco, 1980.
3. Much information of this chapter is based on 'Commercial Book Supply: the availability of book materials through commercial channels, with particular reference to developing countries. 1: Literature Review, by J. Clews and others; 2: Survey by questionnaire by P. Oakeshott (to be published by Unesco).

Authorship

93. The health of a publishing industry, and less directly of the book trade, depends to a considerable extent on authorship. Authorship, particularly in developing countries, is often a part-time activity. Authors in many developing countries have tended to write in the languages of former colonial powers and to have their work published by major publishers in the developed countries. This ensures that their work will be accessible to a larger reading public, make a greater impact internationally and perhaps also be more remunerative to the author. Indigenous publishers are thus deprived of potential material for publication especially much of the best quality outputs of authors. Nevertheless, it is a fact that authors from developing countries, particularly those expecting to publish in scientific journals in the developed countries, experience a high rejection rate from publishers in developed countries. Material from developing countries that is eventually published in developed countries has then to be purchased back by the developing countries. Imports of such material further erodes the development of a significant base for local publishing. A similar though less marked trend can be detected in some industrialized countries and centrally planned economies.

94. Authors may be assisted by the creation of authors' associations, by manuals and guides, by seminars and workshops, by the award of prizes and honours, by tax incentives and by other means of financial support either from governments or from international organizations concerned with the development of local publishing. To quote again from the Charter of the Book: 'Society has a special obligation to establish the conditions in which authors can exercise their creative role' (Article III).

Printing

95. In order to print works for publication, paper, inks, printing and binding equipment and other materials must be available. Developing countries are at a disadvantage as they are obliged to import much of the necessary equipment and supplies. Shortages of funds and currency restrictions often make this difficult or impossible. While inks and machinery may be imported without undue difficulty, this is not always so in the case of paper, because of the world shortage and fluctuations of price and availability. Paper costs have risen dramatically, yet, while many developing countries have the raw materials necessary for paper manufacture, the cost of machinery is often prohibitive. Research into non-traditional materials for paper manufacture is still urgently necessary. To overcome the handicap of developing countries due to world shortages of materials international action is required to ensure that developing countries receive a fair share of the limited resources. Governments of developing countries should ensure that adequate provision for supplies and equipment for production of paper and book manufacture are included in their economic plans. In the case of printing and binding, processes that are labour-intensive can, in some cases, be more economical than capital-intensive methods.

96. New production techniques need to be encouraged. The use of camera-ready copy for reproduction of copies on demand is a well established procedure in industrialized countries, especially for non-conventional publications that are not commercially published or distributed. The possibility of applying this technique in developing countries should be explored not only for such categories of material, but also for scholarly publications and for commercial material when markets are small.

97. The rapid development of computerized methods of printing and publishing in developed countries may further widen the gulf between them and developing countries, which lack the infrastructure and equipment necessary for the application of this technology. The removal or reduction of customs duties and other levies on imported machinery and materials may be beneficial. Other possibilities to be examined include the maximum use of local materials and the sharing of already available outputs, e.g., expensive illustrative material, to reduce printing costs.

Publishing

98. While various elements combine in the production and dissemination of publications, it is the publisher who organizes the whole undertaking, bringing the various elements together, providing editorial control and marketing and distribution expertise. His role is therefore crucial. Publishing always involves certain risks, but in developing countries a number of particular problems increase these risks. Publishers need to recover costs from sales of their publications. Even in developed countries, where indigenous sales are high, many publishers need additional markets in other countries to recover costs. In many developing countries levels of literacy, industrial purchasing power and reading habits affect and often limit the size of the market for publications. This problem is compounded in developing countries by the multiplicity of languages used in some countries. It is also noted that publications of developing countries that are produced in the more widely used languages rarely benefit from substantial demand outside those countries to compensate for the small size of the local market. Limited readership leads to small editions which deny the advantage of economies of scale.

99. The absence of a flourishing indigenous publishing industry in developing countries resulting from the above factors leads to an extensive reliance on imports, which find a ready though limited market. This also applies to smaller developed countries with minority languages. This situation is particularly true of textbooks, often regarded as a sound basis for the development of a publishing industry, and of children's books. In many developing countries a large proportion of textbooks and children's books are imported, or are reproduced in the original or in translation by subsidiaries of foreign companies. They may often not be relevant in content, outlook or other features to the needs of the country, and the profits derived may not be invested in the development of a healthy indigenous publishing industry. It is observed that many developing countries have tended to create with financing from the public sector, agencies responsible for the publication of textbooks, vitally necessary to support the massive educational programmes they have launched, often with Unesco assistance. This area of publishing tends to be predominant in these countries.

100. In order to effectively support national aspirations and development, publications should respond to the need and interests of the people. Publications should therefore not only bring to the people creative works reflecting literacy, scientific and other outputs of the country but also the knowledge and experience of the rest of the world. Translations afford a partial solution, but developing countries often lack translators and foreign currency to pay for translation rights. Science textbooks are sometimes internationally acceptable but adaptations are often more suitable and their production could help to train local authors. However, translations and adaptations can never replace authentic and original creation. There is need for more original material in the national languages, produced by local authors to meet local needs. This is especially important for the development of literacy and the support of education.

101. Planning for the development of national publishing capacity requires national initiative and may require international co-operation to help create the necessary infrastructure. It entails integration with education, economic and social planning and the participation of professional organizations. Possibilities of providing financial incentives such as tax relief on exports and long-term, low-interest financing on a national, bilateral or multilateral basis should be given serious consideration.

Copyright

102. Copyright has the effect of giving creative works the quality of property that can be bought or hired. It protects original works of intellectual creation and enables the creator to control and receive remuneration for the uses made of his work, while enabling society to have access to his work. Legislation has attempted to seek a balance betwen the needs of society for knowledge and the rights of the individual creator and publisher. Once a work has been published the exclusive rights of the copyright owner are subject to some limits. The laws of many countries allow 'fair use', notably the making of single copies of small extracts from books or of articles from journals for the purposes of private research or study. On the other hand, in order to encourage an author to create and publish, society ensures that through legislation the author has sufficient exclusivity to enable him to benefit from the use of his work and to give part of that exclusivity to a publisher who will feel justified in spending time and money to make the work available to the public. The author's right is thus essential if publication is to be secured. International conventions were subsequently developed to ensure international protection of the author's rights and to make works available internationally though domestic sovereignty results in the application of national legislation in regard to both national and foreign authors (national treatment). The 1971 revisions of the Berne Convention and the Universal Copyright Convention have helped publishers in developing countries to acquire reproduction and translation rights from copyright owners in developed countries.

103. Unlicensed and uncontrolled copying, notably of multiple copies of complete publications, may seriously damage the position of the author and the original publisher who has invested time and money, in editing, production, marketing and distribution. These costs do not have to be met by the copier who can thus sell the product more cheaply, thereby eroding the sales of the original publisher. Piracy may also hamper the development of the publishing industry in the countries where it occurs.

Distribution

104. In many countries, especially developing countries, distribution is the weakest link in the chain between author and reader. The retail bookseller is still the mainstay of the book trade, particularly in industrialized countries, though books may be sold through other outlets such as stationers, newsagents, supermarkets and so on. Most bookshops are based in towns because they need a large volume of trade to survive. However, this feature has a severe effect on developing countries where the population living in rural areas is thinly distributed and communications are difficult. It highlights the contrast between development in urban areas and less developed rural areas. Mass distribution does exist in some developing countries where models based on practices in industrialized countries have been successful in towns. The only schemes to penetrate rural areas have combined mass production with postal book clubs or village library schemes.

The most effective distribution systems have either used existing newspaper distributors, or been set up by publishers themselves or by missionary organizations. Many rural areas can be served only by mobile bookshops or one-man shops, though books may also be sold through mixed-goods outlets. Book markets and fairs can also play a constructive role. While booksellers should ideally stock a wide range of titles, in developing countries, especially in rural areas, they can often afford to stock only best-selling novels and textbooks. Delays between the placing of an order for books and the receipt of cash for sales can be considerable; payment facilities that take account of these difficulties are needed to allow the bookseller to provide a satisfactory service.

105. In many countries retail price maintenance allows publishers to fix retail prices. Discounts to booksellers may account for a high proportion of the retail price, as may the discounts offered to schools and libraries. It has been noted that developing countries need to rely extensively on imports. Publishers sometimes recommend or determine prices of imported books within traditional market areas, but more commonly booksellers must add a mark-up to the original retail price when importing books in order to cover additional costs.

106. The cost of production and distribution can be greatly reduced by the use of microforms as a publishing medium. At present (and for the likely foreseeable future) it is largely restricted to report literature and some journals (especially back runs). However, the use of microforms requires reading machines, which in turn require a guaranteed supply of electricity and adequate maintenance, and also, ideally, printing facilities. Unless these are available--and they cost money--the benefits of lower purchase costs may be largely nullified.

Types of publications

107. For journals, distribution is usually direct from the publisher or through a journals agent, rather than through the retail book trade, though in many countries the retail trade also handles some journals. Journal publishing in developing countries tends to be infrequent and irregular and, as with books, there is a significant reliance on imports. These may be supplied at a higher subscription rate or, more often, cheaper, and hence usually slower, methods of distribution may be used while maintaining a uniform subscription rate. Additional problems occur for developing countries if journals are sent by slower methods and if, as appears to happen in a number of cases, issues are lost in transit. Loss usually becomes apparent only when the next issue is received, by which time replacements may be unobtainable as relatively few copies are printed in excess of known demand.

108. The volume of official publishing, both national and international is very large: United Nations publications alone have been estimated to account for five per cent of world hard copy output. As far as production is concerned, intergovernmental organizations, as opposed to commercial type publishers, have a limited. power of choice over the documents they publish. This might explain to a great extent why the quantity produced reaches such high figures and that according to some estimates 85 per cent of it goes unread. It should be mentioned also that the commercial type publishing activities of intergovernmental organizations, concentrated into a small number of bodies (United Nations families, OECD, EEC, etc.) reach such a volume that many of them rank high in the publishing business.[1]

1. Cherns, J.J. Intergovernmental organizations as publishers - a critical look. Paper presented at the Second World Symposium on International Documentation. Brussels: 20-22 June 1980. (UNITAR/AIL/SYM.2/WP.I/3).

109. Official publications (both national and international) can form a significant proportion of acquisitions in many developing countries. Some may be sold through the retail trade. Some countries have centralized much of their departmental publishing and distribution. Despite the various channels established to distribute official documents, many inadequacies remain and much needs to be done to improve their accessibility and use. As Cherns puts it 'the totality of the machinery requires review in the light of modern conditions'.[1] However, action in this area seems to be difficult due to the complexity of the situation. Unesco has commissioned several studies in this area: one on official publications, in co-operation with IFLA, one on the use of United Nations documents in three developing countries, one on the production, control and use of government documents in the Caribbean. It is hoped that the results of these studies when available will help to identify suitable actions.

110. 'Non-conventional' publications, commonly called 'grey literature', are those that are not issued through the usual commercial publishing and distribution channels and therefore present particular difficulties in bibliographic control, acquisition and provision. Much is produced in the form of duplicated typescript or in microform, especially in microfiche. Some may be listed in national bibliographies and rather more in abstracting and indexing journals, but a large proportion is not bibliographically controlled, and this is inevitably reflected in incomplete holdings in collections. There is much need for improvement in the detection, identification and collection of 'grey literature'. Various measures have been taken. For example, in the United States of America and USSR, NTIS and VINITI respectively are concerned with report literature, and in the Federal Republic of Germany the Central Subject Libraries make an effort to cover grey literature within their particular fields. There are similar activities in many other countries in the collection and supply of 'grey literature'. Internationally the European Communities have launched SIGLE (System for Information on Grey Literature in Europe), based on designated centres in member countries. Worldwide systems such as AGRIS have a particular concern with 'grey literature', which is especially important in fields covered by this System. Nevertheless coverage is still imperfect and much valuable information remains unknown and exploited.

111. Audio-visual material--not including microforms, which are merely miniaturized printed matter but including films, sound recordings, slides, videocassettes, etc.--are yet another category for which bibliographic control is inadequate and which is collected systematically in only a few countries. Not all national libraries accept responsibility for the collection and cataloguing of such materials, and co-operative acquisition and cataloguing schemes are very rare. Such material can be of particular benefit to those who are unable to read, and its present and future use merits further study.

112. A category of publication that creates special problems is one that can be loosely called 'ephemera'. It consists of publications often containing only a few pages and produced in small numbers, aimed at a particular audience at a particular time and often relevant only to a particular locality. Though not intended to be of permanent value they can be of the greatest importance and interest for historical, social, political and economic research. Collection of much of this material must be done locally. Ephemeral publications are often on poor quality paper and are difficult to preserve for future use. Their bibliographic control also poses huge problems; normal cataloguing rules are scarcely applicable and the quantity of this material is so vast that the resources of national bibliographic agencies would be overstretched. This is another kind of publication that requires special study if it is to be made widely available.

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1. Cherns J.J. Official Publishing: an overview. Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1979, p.513.

113. Electronic text is as yet in its infancy. In theory infinitely flexible, in practice its publication and distribution differ radically from other forms of publication. It requires communication links and terminals, its flexibility makes it potentially subject to constant change, and the problems of controlling it bibliographically have barely begun to be approached.

114. Bibliographic control has by no means been fully achieved in respect of conventional publications. In many countries bibliographic control of conventional literature by libraries and by the book trade itself is inadequate. Not all countries produce national bibliographies. In many countries where they do exist, coverage is incomplete and there can be significant delays in their production. International Standard Book Numbers are not universally adopted. Trade journals giving bibliographic listings of books are not published in all countries and national directories of publishers are not always compiled. The absence of such information constitutes a fundamental barrier to the identification and acquisition of much potentially useful material.

Import problems

115. Problems associated with the need to import material include customs and excise duties, foreign currency restrictions, and the need to rely on international communications facilities. The Florence agreement[1] recommends duty-free entry to publications and calls on governments to grant as far as possible licences and foreign exchange for publications. It also provides that local taxes on publications should be kept at the same level as for domestic products and that import procedures should be simplified. It has subsequently been recommended that governments should, as far as possible, exempt publications from taxes and other internal charges and from restrictions on quantities imported. Care must obviously be exercised to ensure that the material imported is really needed; 'dumping' by publishers in developed countries of unsold stock is not unknown. Expediting of customs clearance facilities for publications has been suggested but it is a known fact that audio-visual materials are particularly subject to delays.

116. However, the major problems faced by developing countries in obtaining publications from abroad are lack of funds, lack of trained staff, and distance from the major exporters of publications, resulting in a lack of information, high costs and long delays. Carriage by sea is much cheaper than by air but much slower. Delivery time is especially important for journals, particularly scientific and technological journals containing up to date information necessary for research and development. Special postal rates may be of benefit here as a large and increasing proportion of published material is delivered through the mail. Savings can be passed on to the consumer, and lower prices may stimulate further sales. It is therefore particularly disappointing that in some countries special postal rates are no longer in operation.

117. In the above respect the intervention of the Universal Postal Union can be of major help. However, the unreliability of postal services in many developing countries has forced publishers and distributors to use other delivery mechanisms. Price reductions have also been advocated for freight rates and concessionary rates are available for certain types of publications. Incentive rates for air freighting of publications would serve the interests of distributors and readers as well as be of benefit to the airlines.

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1. Agreement on the Importation of Educational, Scientific and Cultural Materials, adopted by Unesco's General Conference at Florence in 1950.

118. Automation of distribution. Automation in the distribution sector is still in its early stages. The areas of greatest impact are stock control, order processing, and accounting and management. While automation can be expected to shortly take over many of the functions of distribution earlier carried out manually, it will be some time before this technology is applied to the distribution sector in the developing countries. Nevertheless the acceleration of distribution procedures would certainly improve the time-frame for access to publications and this is an area in which technological advances could help to improve availability.

Acquisition by libraries and other information providers

119. Without doubt, one of the most satisfactory means of resolving the problems of bringing publications to all potential readers is the library, whether this is a separate unit or a collection that forms part of a broader information service. Libraries must not only exist--and their existence can by no means be taken for granted--but be able to identify and obtain the publications their readers need. Lack of information, both bibliographic and promotional, is a significant barrier to acquisition in many countries, even of indigenous publications. Significant improvement of this situation is needed if potentially useful publications and the sources of supply are to be identified.

120. In industrialized countries most library books and journals are acquired by purchase. Some booksellers and publishers offer approval plans and blanket order schemes to libraries, thus simplifying and hastening the acquisition process. Such schemes rarely exist in developing countries. Delays occur when material is imported from abroad with the additional disadvantage that extra charges may be added to cover the additional costs involved. Libraries in industrialized countries do not use international exchange of publications extensively for foreign acquisitions. However, this method is used more heavily by libraries in centrally planned economies, particularly for foreign material, often using surplus legal deposit copies for the purpose.

121. In developing countries readers depend heavily on libraries to meet their needs. However, the acquisition of library materials is beset with the difficulties already indicated. The poor organization of the book trade in many developing countries makes the acquisition of indigenous material difficult, and imports cause even greater problems. Purchase is subject to delays, high costs, import restrictions, and the unavailability of foreign currency, while the loss of material in transit is not uncommon. International exchange of publications is sometimes used, but libraries in developing countries often find it difficult to achieve parity with exchange partners. Exchange can avoid purchase costs and save foreign currency, but it incurs high postal charges and extra staff costs. Legal deposit laws exist in most developing countries, but enforcement is difficult and many publications are not deposited. Gifts may be useful if receiving libraries can negotiate what they are to receive and donors do not attach special conditions. Unnegotiated gifts usually bring more costs than benefits. Co-operative acquisition schemes have not usually been very successful because of conflicts between co-operative and institutional needs; they can extend availability when money is plentiful but rarely maintain it when finances are reduced.

122. Although libraries form, after educational institutions, the largest market for many types of publication and for many publishers, publishers often do not effectively direct their publicity to libraries. Publishers in developed countries can often dispose of as much as 80 per cent of a print run of good children's books or scientific and technical publications to libraries. The development of libraries, especially public and school libraries in developing countries, is a major stimulus

to the growth of publishing, partly as a market in themselves, and partly by promoting and assisting literacy and readership and thus extending the market for publications.

Co-ordination

123. The many factors that operate in the creation, manufacture and dissemination of publications are often poorly co-ordinated and unable individually to provide solutions to problems. If these are co-ordinated one could expect more books and journals to be produced, the quality of content and production to be improved and products to be available at reasonable prices. In the resolution of these problems the need for co-operation becomes apparent. Careful planning should be linked with national efforts to take into account the diverse requirements of authors, publishers, booksellers, librarians and readers. In a number of countries on the recommendation of Unesco National Book Development Councils have been established as a means of ensuring such planning and co-operation.[1]

Conditions in individual countries vary, but a number of common objectives may be identified:

to lay down the framework for the development of the publications industry, classified as a priority industry, in the context of the overall requirements of the country, and to bring about the full integration of the industry in economic, social and cultural development planning;

to secure the active co-operation of all ministries, agencies, professional associations and educational and intellectual institutions concerned with the writing, production, marketing and utilization of publications;

to devise and implement a programme of concerted action;

to foster and co-ordinate research into the problems of the industry, in particular how best the widest distribution of publications can be obtained;

to encourage the formation of professional associations where these do not exist and the strengthening of such associations where they do;

to create public consciousness of books and journals and encourage reading habits;

to encourage and promote the provision of adequate library services;

to organize and provide training facilities in all matters relating to reading materials;

to encourage the maintenance of high professional standards both in conduct and in technical processes.

In countries where such bodies have existed for some time, it would be appropriate to investigate their effectiveness.

1. National Councils for Book Development. Paris, Unesco, 1979.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. It is recommended that governments give consideration to the removal of barriers which inhibit or restrict access to publications from abroad, namely: customs and excise duties; inadequate amounts of hard currency for acquisitions; and arbitrary limits on the quantities that may be imported.

2. Governments and other agencies, national and international, should examine the problems of availability of non-conventional literature produced by them, in particular, official publications, 'grey literature', and audio-visual materials; and take steps to ensure effective bibliographic control of these materials.

3. Member States should ensure that legal deposit regulations are strengthened, both in form and in enforcement, as a means of achieving comprehensive national bibliographic control.

4. Member States should assist the production of national bibliographies, generally a function of national libraries, by providing them with adequate funding and the necessary official support.

5. Member States should support and finance the development of libraries as a high priority in view of their important role in social, economic and educational development.

6. Publishers and librarians should jointly support all efforts to achieve improved bibliographic control.

7. Intergovernmental organizations, in particular United Nations Agencies, should make all efforts to improve production, bibliographic control, distribution, availability and use of their documents and publications.

A number of possible recommendations seem to fall within the scope of the World Book Congress and are mentioned here for completeness but not for action by the UAP Congress:

that a high priority be attached by governments to the development of indigenous publishing, especially in native languages, to promote literacy and education and to spread information;

that publishers, retailers and librarians where necessary establish or improve professional associations, to provide an adequate infrastructure for the development of publishing and the supply of publications; these bodies should co-operate to ensure co-ordinated development in matters of common concern;

that educational and training programmes be devised by relevant professional associations for publishers and retailers, in particular to help retailers to become more efficient;

that direct financial support be given by government in appropriate countries to the publishers of children's and educational books;

that more efforts be made locally, possibly with the initial support of governments, to produce paper and other basic materials required for publishing, by developing technologies and machinery to make use of locally available raw materials;

that the role of National Book Development Councils and their equivalents as effective agents of action be evaluated.

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Introduction[1]

124. This chapter will discuss aspects of the development of policies and procedures by libraries, documentation and information centres and similar organizations of individual countries for the systematic collection of publications to meet local and remote needs.

The need for action

125. Publications are available only if they have previously been acquired. Users will have confidence in a service and continue to use it if all or most of their needs are met quickly if not immediately. The ability of institutions to acquire material to meet such needs is inevitably limited by the financial resources available. If one considers that world book production in 1978 was estimated at 642,000 titles,[2] it is obvious that no single institution can buy more than a fraction of this, which would in turn be only a small proportion of what its readers require. Selection is aimed at making optimal use of the funds available. Some publications virtually select themselves, while others (often the great majority) are clearly irrelevant to the established clientele of the particular institutions. This will still leave a very large number of publications from among which a selection must be made and this is a very difficult task.

Growing demand, growing output, growing cost and shrinking budgets

126. It might be supposed that local collections are capable of meeting most needs and that the material not acquired which has to be borrowed from elsewhere is of peripheral interest. Even in developed countries, this is true only for the general reader, not for the specialist or researcher. University libraries in developed countries have been known to borrow up to 20,000 items from elsewhere. The very large increase in interlending in most countries since World War II indicates the growing inability of local institutions, even large and well-funded ones, to meet needs which are growing in volume and complexity.

127. The situation is likely to deteriorate further. Although subsidies in some countries have enabled prices to be kept down, the cost of publications in many countries continues to rise as a result of higher material, labour and distribution costs. The cost of journals published in the United States of America has more than trebled since 1970,[3] while in the United Kingdom a sample of British journals likely to be acquired by specialized and learned libraries increased in cost by a factor of five during the same period.[4] Book prices in the United Kingdom increased by over 30 per cent between 1980 and 1981.[5] Given the endemic devaluations in many developing countries and the fact that most of their acquisitions come from developed countries, one can easily see the consequences of these rises in acquisition budgets of developing countries.

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1. The main source of information on which this session is based is: Collins, J and Finer, R. National Acquisition Policies and Systems: A Comparative Study of Existing Systems and Possible Models. Wetherby: IFLA International Office for UAP, 1982.
2. Unesco Statistical Yearbook 1980. Paris: Unesco, 1980.
3. Outlook on Research Libraries, Vol. 2, No. 8, pp 5-6.
4. Library Association Record, Vol. 83, No. 5, pp 232-233.
5. Library Association Record, Vol. 83, No. 7, p. 331.

128. These increases are occurring at a time when the funding of library and information services in many countries is decreasing in real terms. Reductions in the budgets of the United Kingdom university libraries of 25 per cent since 1979 are not uncommon[1] and in the three years up to 1980 spending by these universities on books has gone down by some 33 per cent.[2] The situation in developing countries is even more critical where many institutions are unable even to ensure minimum local provision. Their need to import much material at increasingly high prices with precious foreign currency has to be balanced against other more pressing needs of the economy.

Extending resources

129. As even the best funded collections cannot meet all needs systematic measures need to be taken to enlarge the pool of resources available to users so that material not locally available can be supplied when needed. Without such measures many needs will remain unsatisfied, and lack of confidence in services will place further constraints upon demands. In many countries co-operative arrangements between libraries, documentation centres and similar institutions exist for the acquisition of material for mutual benefit. The participating institutions could be located in the same geographical area or could be interested in material of the same type or subject field. These arrangements are often informal and are rarely obligatory. In the absence of more formal agreements such arrangements can make a valuable contribution, but they are at best only a partial solution to a much larger problem.

130. Systematic acquisition of additional material helps to optimize information services at the local level. It also enables individual information institutions to concentrate on meeting needs of their users while ensuring the availability of additional material to meet occasional needs, as and when they arise. Systematic acquisition will also assist individual countries to meet their international responsibilities. As the country of origin of a publication represents the obvious location to which a request for that publication would be addressed, even as a last resort, individual countries should acquire their own national imprints systematically so as to be able to guarantee their availability if requested from abroad.

Positive availability

131. The distinction between reference and lending responsibilities is of fundamental importance. An acquisitions policy or system that is intended solely to provide reference services is not by itself sufficient to achieve the goal of Universal Availability of Publications. Unless the publications acquired are loanable, users have to travel to the collection to consult the many items that cannot be supplied as copies. For many potential users this is inconvenient and for some it is impossible. This aspect is treated more fully in Chapter 6, but the link between acquisition systems and interlending systems may be stressed here. Local provision can be optimized only if an effective system exists to obtain material held in other collections. At least, it is impossible to determine the nature of acquisition policies, both national and local, independently from any interlending system and only an analysis of demands would help to determine the elements of both the acquisition policy and the interlending system. In view of this, participants may wish to consider this relationship between the development or improvement of an interlending system and the upgrading of collections and propose priorities.

1. Outlook on Research Libraries, Vol. 3, No. 7, p. 5.
2. Outlook on Research Libraries, Vol. 2, No. 6, pp. 8-9.

National acquisitions policies and systems

132. To facilitate the acquisition of material on a systematic basis both to meet the needs of individual countries and to fulfil international obligations national acquisitions policies and systems are desirable. The following definitions are proposed:

133. A national acquisitions policy creates the programme through which the published material held in a nation's libraries, archives and documentation centres is gathered and controlled in order to be made available. It prescribes formally the organized collection of resources intended for the nation's use and beyond. The policy may indicate the categories of material to the acquired or those that will not be acquired. It should be mentioned that, in spite of its obvious advantages, most countries do not at present have a national acquisitions policy.

134. A national acquisition system is a planned and explicit set of procedures and practices that covers either the actual mechanics of fulfilling the acquisitions policy, or the procedures for acquiring material in the absence of a policy. Where there is no policy the system becomes of paramount importance.

Coverage of a national acquisitions policy

135. If it is accepted that a national acquisitions policy and system are necessary in individual countries to ensure the future availability of material, then consideration must be given to the extent of coverage of that policy. Total self-sufficiency, which can be achieved only by the acquisition of all material, is obviously impossible in any country and limits must be set.

Coverage may be determined by subject, form of material, 'level' (academic, popular, etc.), language, country of origin, date or perceived likely usefulness--or a combination of these criteria. Practical factors such as finances are likely to be at least as important as philosophical ones. The choice of criteria will reflect existing provision and predicted needs.

136. National and foreign publications must be considered separately. No country should expect to obtain its own national imprints from other countries, the only major exceptions being older publications forming an integral and inseparable part of the archives of former colonial powers. Thus the policy should aim to ensure the acquisition of all national imprints, both to meet the needs of the country itself and to fulfil its obligations to other countries.

137. The acquisition of foreign publications should be related to needs. The need for foreign imprints depends on several factors, e.g., extent and nature of domestic publishing; languages used in the country (countries with minority languages are more dependent on foreign imprints). The availability of foreign exchange and political constraints such as censorship will influence the availability of foreign publications for meeting these needs.

138. If libraries have reasonably fast and cheap access to the resources of other countries for less frequently used foreign publications, there may seem to be little need for domestic acquisition of much foreign material. However, to borrow from other countries more than about 30 per cent of the publications that are not available in local collections not only implies heavy dependence, but may also be very uneconomic.[1] It is relatively straightforward to compare the cost of

1. National interlending systems: A comparative study of existing systems and possible models. By Maurice B. Line and others. Paris, Unesco, 1980. (PGI-78/ES/24 (Rev.).

borrowing an item with the cost of acquiring it, but a rational choice requires a projection of future needs. The future needs as regards journals may be estimated with greater accuracy than that of books.

139. The content of a policy should therefore be based on the relationship between production and predicted needs. A national acquisitions policy should aim to ensure the acquisition, for subsequent availability, of all national imprints, and sufficient foreign material to meet 70 per cent of needs. It is important here to differentiate between needs and demands. Individuals may demand information they do not need, and certainly need information they do not demand. Demands are partly dependent on expectation, which in turn depends partly on existing provision of library and information services. A need is a potential demand.

140. No general prescription can be given as to the coverage of a national acquisitions policy. National values and the individual circumstances of each country's political structure, economy and pattern of library and information provision are unique. One would however expect current serials to form the core of most programmes, with an emphasis on those subjects in which a country's industry and/or research specializes. Small collections of carefully chosen serials can meet a very significant proposition of demand. Unesco has started work in this area and two core lists of serials in engineering and biological sciences are available as pilot versions.[1] Monographs, report literature, non-printed media, ephemeral material and retrospective gap filling may all be incorporated into a programme once it is well established. Participants may wish to discuss the opportunity of such lists for monographs in selected fields or for types of institutions (e.g. school libraries).

Requirements for effective systems

141. There are several requirements for an effective national acquisitions system, especially one relying to any extent on co-operation. A co-operative spirit may be lacking; individual institutions may be jealous of their autonomy, and different groups may have different ideas about the organization of a national system. If a national policy exists requiring some degree of co-operation, institutions on which it is based must be actively committed to it. A general commitment amongst the library community to the principle of Universal Availability of Publications is needed, and in particular support for a national acquisitions programme. A central planning and steering body is required, and its authority over all participants has to be accepted. This does not necessarily call for a government department; if there is a central library authority it would be reasonable for it to take on this role. Where no national library administration exists, and in countries where various ministries are responsible for different sectors of library and information services, the planning and co-ordination of a national system must take this into account.

142. A national acquisitions policy that rests on the participation of a number of independent institutions must be able to put at their disposal sufficient funds to allow them to undertake their additional responsibilities in acquiring publications that they would not otherwise acquire, and in the use of staff time to serve other institutions from their collections. The existence of such a national system will also improve local availability. These objectives could be attained with a reasonable guarantee of long-term funding of the national system.

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1. Core List of Journals in the Life Sciences (Pilot Version). Prepared by ICSU/AB-Paris: Unesco, 1979 (PGI-79/WS/12). Core List of Journals in Engineering (Pilot version). Prepared by ICSU/AB - Paris: Unesco, 1979 (PGI-79/WS/13).

143. The development of library and information services is often accorded low priority by governments, and this attitude reflected in inadequate library budgets. As governments, directly or indirectly, are responsible for funding much of the library and information services of a country, steps may have to be taken to demonstrate convincingly how lack of availability of publications and information inhibits developments. The success of UAP also depends therefore on securing government support for its principles and its programme.

144. As a national acquisitions policy covers also the acquisition of foreign publications, their procurement must be relatively unrestricted. In some countries lack of foreign exchange or insufficient foreign exchange by the government may be a restriction on imports. Governments may also prohibit or restrict imports to encourage national production of publications. These practices need careful study and improvements whenever possible. A further practical prerequisite for an effective system is the existence of good guides to bibliographic and documentary resources. As no system, whether based on one institution or a collaborative one, can be comprehensive, information must be available if possible on the actual holdings of such systems, or at least on the criteria used for collection building.

145. Similarly, as already indicated, a good interlending system is needed. A system based on the distribution of material between institutions or the use of a central unit of first or last resort requires that material can be borrowed as and when wanted, thereby allowing individual institutions to concentrate more fully on satisfying immediate local needs. Few countries can claim to have good interlending systems. This aspect is treated in Chapter 6.

146. A further consideration of a national acquisition policy concerns the retention of material acquired to meet future needs. Institutions such as libraries and information centres would be confident of being able to effectively satisfy needs of their users if they were certain that the material acquired by the national system would be available whenever required, even in the distant future. Hence a national acquisition policy must ensure the retention of material acquired and the system must contain a mechanism for it. Retention can be achieved in a number of ways and these are discussed further in Chapter 5.

147. Finally, there is need for continuous evaluation of the policy and systems to ensure their effectiveness. This is most simply achieved by monitoring unsatisfied interlibrary load requests, especially if the provision of the material is the responsibility of a single central service. In a co-operative system, detail on unsatisfied requests should be sent to a central unit which could present an overall picture enabling areas of weakness to be identified and remedial action taken.

Mechanics of collection

148. Domestic imprints are commonly acquired for a national system by reliance on legal deposit regulations, but their effectiveness varies greatly. Legal deposit laws do not exist in all countries, and in many countries where they do exist they are of recent origin and may not cover all forms of publication.[1] Further, such laws are not by any means always observed by publishers. This is especially so in developing countries, in many of which only a small minority of national imprints are deposited. Furthermore, material acquired in this way often has restrictions attached to it that inhibit its wide availability on loan. The

1. See Lunn J. Guidelines for legal deposit legislation. Paris: Unesco, 1981 (PGI-81/WS/23).

formulation, extension, revision and enforcement of legal deposit regulations should, as necessary, be considered by governments to keep track of the national bibliographic output and also to have the publications available for future reference and loan purposes.

149. Foreign publications may be acquired by standard purchasing procedures. Aspects of the commercial supply of publications are treated in Chapter 3. For many countries, especially developing countries, acquisition of foreign publications is costly, as local agents may apply a high mark-up on the actual price of the publications. Direct purchase as an alternative may not be possible because of credit and currency problems. Shipment by surface mail, while relatively cheap, is slow and may result in material not being available when required, while airmail, though faster, may be prohibitively expensive. Losses in transit are also frequent.

150. International exchange, in accordance with Unesco conventions, may be used as a means for acquiring foreign publications, particularly when there are foreign currency difficulties. The extent to which internal exchange can be practised may be limited by the fact that in countries where exchange may be most beneficial, levels of book and journal production are normally low, with few publications produced in the widely used languages. The most sought after publications from the developed countries may not be available in exchange for similar publications from the developing countries, due to the large disparity in their respective market values. This severely limits international exchange as a means of availability at the present time, but efforts should be made to strengthen this form of international co-operation as a means of building up national collections in the developing countries.

Possible types of acquisition systems

151. For a system to be effective, it must be designed to meet identified needs under given conditions. This requires the collection of data and can be based only on detailed research of the available information resources and the needs of users, together with a realistic assessment of the resources that should be made available to improve the situation. The relationship between conditions and needs is unique to each country. Thus there are various methods of organizing national acquisitions systems to meet the objectives of a national acquisitions policy, some of which reflect existing practice. A number of models are suggested. These are not put forward for detailed discussion, but rather in an attempt to indicate possible lines of development, and to give substance to the considerations noted above. Participants may wish to comment on the appropriateness of these models to their own particular circumstances, and give consideration to the relative weight and importance of their relative advantages and disadvantages.

Centralized acquisition

152. Provision may be the responsibility of a central collection of second resort (after the local library). Such a collection may serve a single country, or it may be designed for a group of neighbouring countries. It would aim to meet a high proportion of demand (85 per cent). Alternatively, in a country with limited financial means and relatively low demand the collection could be limited to a core of heavily used journals.

153. Such a system would need to be supported to a greater or lesser degree by other libraries. Countries with a tradition of centralization can accept more readily a system based on a single national resource. Such concentration on one collection allows the objectives of the national policy to be worked out simply and its systems can be designed and monitored accordingly. There should be no conflict between priorities since there will be no reference use or local users, and no problem of defining coverage. Libraries need apply to only one source, which should be organized to offer faster access and supply.

154. However, such a system would be very costly; in many countries financial resources may not be available for a new central unit and it may prove impossible to amalgamate existing collections. The political, financial and organizational difficulties associated with its application to a multinational context should not be underestimated. An example of centralized provision is the British Library Lending Division.

Concentration on a few libraries

155. Provision may be concentrated on perhaps four or five central subject libraries, whether these are established for the purpose or existing libraries designated as having national functions. In many cases these could cater between them for most of a country's research needs. In developed countries with established libraries the system can be based on existing centres of excellence. University libraries would play an important role in developing countries, which are more likely to adopt a gradual approach, while developed countries are more likely to attempt more comprehensive coverage at the outset. Additional funding would be needed either to create such collections or to allow existing libraries to be developed to fulfil their national responsibilities. Co-ordination of subject responsibilities and boundaries is very important. Central subject libraries exist in many countries, e.g. Federal Republic of Germany, Bangladesh.

Regional distribution of responsibilities

156. An alternative to division by broad subject category would be the distribution of acquisition responsibilities at a regional level, possibly with a central unit of last resort. Such a solution requires large regional libraries to act as a first back-stop to local provision and to co-ordinate acquisitions and interlibrary lending within the region. Unsatisfied requests can be channelled to other regions and finally to a central unit of last resort. Such a solution would be very costly in total as it would result in a high level of duplication. However, regionalization, other than as a result of political structure and/or national ethos of decentralization, may be suitable in very large countries, in countries with poor communication facilities, and possibly in countries in which library provision is plentiful and a strong traditional of regional co-operation already exists. Examples of regionalization include the Federal Republic of Germany and Yugoslavia.

157. Such a model can be adapted to fulfil multinational functions, with one central library serving as the unit of last resort for a grouping of countries with close links. Each country would co-ordinate its acquisitions with the other members of the group, for example by taking account of the particular interests and specialist collections of individual member countries. Multinational schemes have the best chance of success when there is a tradition of formal co-operation between countries in economic and governmental spheres, and when the countries are linked

by common linguistic, cultural and other ties. It is by no means clear that multinational policies can be designed that are totally compatible with national practice and needs. The best example of multinational regional co-operation is afforded by the Scandinavian countries.

Decentralized acquisitions

158. A system could be based on decentralization allocation of responsibilities. This does not require the establishment of new collections, but builds on existing strengths, conferring national status on or giving national responsibilities to selected libraries. The division of responsibility may be by subject, country of origin, language, date of publication, form of publication, etc. The most common division is by subject, but this is bound to encounter problems, such as the overlapping of fields whose boundaries are not clear-cut and are in any case liable to change with the growth of knowledge. Nor does subject division necessarily best serve users, as related materials may be scattered. Decisions also have to be made as to which libraries are to be involved. The greater the number of libraries, the more complex the programme. A strong central organizing and co-ordinating body is essential. The distribution of responsibilities is common in many countries, e.g. Denmark, the German Democratic Republic.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Considering that a national acquisitions policy is an effective means of ensuring an appropriate level of availability of local and foreign publications, Member States are urged to:

   (a) examine, where national acquisitions policies exist, the levels and methods of provision presently ascertained and practised, and take steps necessary to ensure their suitability to meet expected future requirements and maintain effective levels of provision;

   (b) take urgent steps, where no acquisitions policies exist, for the design and implementation of such policies as a means of improving availability.

2. It is recommended that subregional or regional policies be drawn up, where feasible, in which several countries, by mutual agreement, undertake planned acquisitions programmes for the benefit of all parties to the agreement.

3. National acquisitions policies should be closely connected with national interlending systems and national repository systems.

4. Member States which have no legal deposit legislation should consider its introduction to meet the needs of UAP and UBC (but such deposit should not be considered as the sine qua non condition of copyright protection).

5. Recently independent Member States should make arrangements to ensure that national imprints removed from their countries by formal colonial powers be identified and copies be made available to them.

6. A pilot project should be established in a Member State possibly with Unesco assistance, to design and establish a national acquisitions policy and system as a model for possible application in other countries.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction[1]

159. This session is concerned with the function of preserving publications for a long time, or indefinitely, to serve future users, as practised by libraries, archives and other information centres.

160. Archives at all levels have in their keeping varying quantities of older publications and will continue to acquire increasing quantities of published documents. However, this material traditionally came into their keeping not by deliberate policies of acquisition as in the case of libraries but by reason of the presence of such material in archive groups passed to them for permanent preservation under statutory or administrative procedures. From these remarks must be excepted those national archives which, by law, function as copyright depositories for their countries. In this context, they occupy the same position as 'copyright libraries'--libraries in receipt of material supplied on legal deposit. In addition most public archives now also deliberately acquire and preserve a non-circulating record set ('Printed Archives') of the publications of the institution which they serve. The printed archives should be taken into account in policy and planning.

161. Legal deposit libraries have a clear repository function, in that they have a responsibility to retain the material published by their country. However, consideration of repository policies and planning must not be limited to legal deposit collections. The preservation by each country of its national imprints as part of its cultural heritage can make a significant contribution to UAP only if the material can be made widely available. As noted in Chapter 4, restrictions are often placed on the availability of material acquired by legal deposit. Further, there will be a need for the continuing availability of foreign publications, to which statutory archival responsibilities may not apply.

162. That an institution may serve as a repository, in the sense of storing books for future use, does not of course mean that it does not serve other functions; very few serve solely as repositories.

The need for action

163. An essential element of UAP is the permanent availability of publications. The number of publications that remain permanently available through commercial channels is inevitably very limited. In most countries, availability is assured only of works published in the last three years, in others to a still shorter period. Second-hand purchase can supplement current availability, but only to a very limited extent.

164. One of the main, and indeed unique, roles of libraries and archives is to make available publications of the past. Some, especially national and academic libraries, assume a responsibility for retaining all works that they have acquired. However, access to such material may be confined to consultation and not extend to lending. This responsibility may, with time, become harder to shoulder due, for example, to space or financial constraints. Others, particularly public and industrial libraries, are much more concerned with recent publications rather than with the retention of older material, and redundant or obsolete items are commonly withdrawn from stock.

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1. The main source of information on which this session is based is: Capital Planning Information. National Repository Plans and Programmes: a Comparative Study of Existing Plans and Possible Models. Wetherby: IFLA International Office for UAP, 1982.

165. These problems and different approaches to the subject of availability present a serious danger that the last loanable copies (perhaps even the last copies, whether loanable or not) of many items previously acquired by the libraries, information services and documentation centres, in a country will be lost to the country or even to the world. This applies particularly to more 'popular' publications that are not generally acquired by academic or research libraries, yet may constitute basic material for research in the future. It is known that the loss of material in this way has occurred in the past, and even developed countries can no longer locate or supply on loan or by photocopy some of their own publications. The problem is becoming more urgent as the construction of new buildings is not keeping pace with the intake of material, and publications have to be discarded due to lack of storage space.

The organization of repositories - Geographical coverage

166. Repositories may be local, regional or national. The choice may be determined by political and administrative considerations rather than needs. In a country with a federal constitution, for example, while a national repository might be an ideal solution, actual responsibility may lie at a state level.

167. The choice may also be determined by the size of the country. Repositories located in metropolitan areas may permit physical access to the material by users and would allow material to be quickly retrieved from them for use in or through the depositing libraries. Regional or national repositories at a distance from those they are intended to serve would have to be linked to an efficient communications network. It is not certain that regional repositories could provide a more comprehensive service than national repositories unless they are within easy travelling distance, say 30 kilometres at most. However, consideration should be given to the fact that a single national repository might be vulnerable to a natural or man-made disaster. A national repository, hundreds or maybe thousands of kilometres from some of the institutions it is intended to serve, would be inconvenient and unlikely to serve its purpose.

Coverage by subject

168. Repositories may be designed to cover material on a subject basis or may cover all subjects. However, when planning for retention of material for long periods of time it would perhaps be unadvisable to separate this material by subject as the boundaries of subjects cannot be established permanently with any confidence. Division by subject may lead both to duplication and to gaps because some items fall between subjects, and since nearly all repositories are on closed access there seems to be little point in establishing systems to cater for separate subjects. However, where a national interlending or national acquisitions policy is based on division by subject, a repository function might usefully be linked to these other functions on the same basis.

Coverage by type of institution

169. Repositories may be planned so as to be able to serve different types of information institutions. A repository that caters for all types of institutions could integrate its total resources and hence be more cost-effective. It would thus appear that there would be no need for differentiating between materials derived from different types of institution (say academic and public libraries) within the repository. Some librarians and administrators, however, see a combined

facility as impractical because of the different nature of the material coming from the types of institutions. Financial and administrative problems might also arise if different types of institution participating in the repository are responsible to different government departments or local authorities.

Active and passive repositories

170. Repositories may be passive or active; that is either their sole function may be that of receiving and storing material, or this function may be linked with an active acquisitions policy, a substantial loan activity, and/or an exchange activity. It may be argued that a relegation policy that identifies material of very low use is more successful than one that results in extensive use of relegated material. However, provision from a central store can release considerable amounts of space in individual institutions, which can then give greater attention to more direct reader service functions. In a number of countries repositories are, or are planned to be, part of the interlending network.

The distribution of duplicates

171. A repository may also play an active role in the distribution of duplicates. This requires that ownership of material transferred to the repository is relinquished to allow for the integration of stocks held and the weeding of duplicate copies. Some of these can be of real value to institutions within the country, especially ones that are recently established, impecunious, or weak in publications of a particular period. Much of the remainder may be useful to institutions in other countries, especially developing countries. The organized distribution of duplicates can be a cheap and effective way of filling gaps in established collections and building up new collections; without some national repository plan it is very difficult to achieve. It seems doubtful whether duplicate disposal plans are well developed or managed within or between many countries.

Acquisition and retention

172. A link between repositories and acquisitions policies may be of substantial benefit only to institutions whose budgets enable them to buy little used material. Where this is acquired it can be transferred direct to a repository, by-passing detailed cataloguing procedures and thus saving substantial amounts of staff time.

Finance and management

173. Management of repositories that are appendages of an institution, or that are nationally financed presents no problems. The situation may change in the case of co-operative repositories which may be financed and managed in a variety of ways. Each participating institution may rent space in a repository, or pay a contribution in proportion to its budget or in proportion to its use. Management may be the responsibility of a board of representatives of participating institutions. Voting powers may vary from one vote per representative to proportional powers based on contributions or usage. The system becomes more complex when the number of participating institutions is neither very small nor very large; when the number becomes large simple arrangements are needed if the system is to be manageable. In any case, care must be taken that the problems and costs of organization do not cancel out the benefits.

Conservation

174. The retention of materials for future use needs to be associated with a conservation policy. Nearly all the paper of books produced after the early nineteenth century is subject to decay, in some cases fairly rapid, quite apart from the normal wear and tear received by books. Systematic retention policies should allow the costs of conservation, whether this involves the preservation of paper copy, conversion to microfilm of archival quality, or other means such as digitization, to be optimized. It is easier to carry out a conservation programme if only a few libraries are involved, both because the organization required is much simpler and because the most effective and economic use can be made of conservation equipment and staff.

Requirements for effective systems

175. There appear to be a number of key factors that influence the successful establishment of a repository programme within individual countries.

Ownership of material

176. The first concerns the ownership of material, and this is further divided into two aspects: willingness to relinquish ownership, and ability to do so. Institutions, particularly in the academic and research library sector, acknowledge the need for permanent conservation and many feel they are abdicating responsibility by passing control to a third party. This is especially so in countries where repositories are of recent origin or are in the process of being planned. Fears persist that they may not be well equipped to handle such material and that it may be lost if it is lent to other institutions, and there may be no guarantee that material will be returned to depositing institutions if errors are made.

177. Another consideration is the possible reduction of institutional prestige, which is often associated with the size of the collection. Large scale transfers could result in collections that grow more slowly, remain more or less the same size, or even shrink. The acceptance of performance and output measures based on user satisfaction rather than size of stock may help to overcome these attitudes, but this is inevitably a slow process.

178. Even if institutions are willing to relinquish ownership, they may not be able to do so. Material is usually purchased under fairly strict budgetary and other policies. Government regulations and the need to account for materials held may preclude disposal, even to another agency of the same government. To overcome this problem, legislation or major modification of regulations may be necessary, and this may be difficult to achieve even if the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of repositories can be demonstrated, thought this is very difficult to do in advance.

Management capability

179. A second factor, alluded to above, is management capability. This is essential if repositories are to gain widespread support from those they are intended to serve. Donating institutions must be convinced that the repository is competent to conserve materials, that it can handle large amounts of widely disparate material, and above all that it can retrieve and rapidly deliver material subsequently required.

Relegation issues

180. A third key factor is the issue of what and how to relegate. One of the main barriers to the withdrawal of items from main collections is the difficulty and cost of selection, as well as the cost of withdrawal. Several criteria have been advocated or used in practice. Date of publication or accession is a crude indicator, even if different dates are applied to different subjects. Date of last circulation or the number of uses in the last 'n' years is much more satisfactory as an indicator, but such data are difficult and expensive to ascertain unless machine-readable records are available. Individual selection is even more costly and, though psychologically more acceptable, probably less reliable. Alternatively whole sections of stock in less-used subjects can be withdrawn, or material could be withdrawn on a random basis outside 'core' items, as use outside this core is likely to be largely random.

181. The ease or difficulty of decisions on relegation is also crucial to the success of a repository system. If guidelines can be established for implementation by low-level staff with a minimum of disruption to the normal workings of an institution then it is more likely that it will participate. If decision-making is protracted, liable to interference and time-consuming, then other approaches will be sought and co-operation with any established programme will be less than total.

User needs

182. A final factor concerns user needs. Demands from users to retain direct access can create pressures that are difficult to ignore; the feeling and the fear of loss may still be very powerful barriers. Users may be reluctant to accept that material can be housed at a distance without serious damage to research. Although in most libraries a small proportion of stock accounts for a very high proportion of use, the removal of large amounts of stock inevitably affects browsing and serendipity. While the value of browsing may have been overstated - a smaller stock may actually be more browsable than a very large one - it is nevertheless true that the withdrawal of less-used material makes effective bibliographic access much more necessary. Much less-used material is older and subject access to it may be very poor. The problem is especially acute in the humanities. As yet little positive effort has been put into improving retrospective bibliographic access.

Possible models

183. The main aim of repositories is to save money, by reducing unnecessay duplication, by extending the range of material available, by using accommodation on cheaper land than that occupied by participating institutions, or by using cheaper storage methods. Participating institutions would not only gain storage space but could also be better organized for the benefit of users and staff. They could also make better use of their acquisitions policy, and their catalogues would be less bulky and simpler to use. All these advantages are also available to institutions working in co-operation with one another and without any central repository, but the practical difficulties and costs of achieving and maintaining a programme of dispersed co-operative acquisition and retention are substantial, to which must be added the problem of identifying unique copies and ensuring their permanent retention. At the other end of the scale the state may act by establishing a national policy. A diversity of solutions is possible of which a number of basic models is presented.

184. A separately administered, national, centralized repository may be established to which all literature meeting particular criteria could be sent--e.g., older than a stated term of years, unused for a stated period, etc. Compliance with this requirement would be monitored. The acquisitions policies of participating institutions could be planned giving allowance for subsequent transfer of stock to the repository and, where necessary, ordinances or local laws would have provision for the necessary transfer of ownership. The repository would handle all material sent to it, and this would minimize the work required at participating institutions. Features of such a system are: (a) considerable central direction; (b) reduction in the responsibilities and action of participating institutions; (c) probably substantial cost savings; (d) a clear-cut, easily understood system which would provide a one-stop location for materials that come within the criteria adopted; (e) a clearinghouse for disposal of duplicates and a national interlending base could be incorporated if considered necessary, and (f) scope for international co-operation which would be facilitated through a designated focal point for the supply of publications.

185. Such a system would seem to be particularly suitable for smaller countries with centrally planned economies, and for less developed countries where library and information resources are not well developed and existing patterns not set into routines that are incapable of change.

186. A more flexible, nationally based system, allowing all institutions to send to a national store material that they regarded as little used (by their own criteria) or for which they no longer had space. A sub-option of this model might provide for the retention of ownership of materials for a set period of time to permit the return of deposited items should subsequent demand require it. This would allow less stringent selection from the stock at the first stage of disposal and so save money. Such a repository could be separately managed, or it could be part of the national library, either with a separate department, housing the materials or with the material integrated into the main stock, unneeded duplicates having first been removed. Features of this model, compared with the previous one, are: less central control, greater freedom for participating institutions, considerable (though less) cost savings, a less clear-cut system for locating materials and possibilities for some duplicate disposal and international co-operation.

187. Such a system would seem to be most suitable for small to medium sized developed countries with non-federal political structures, substantial library resources and well-established patterns of information provision. Another factor would be that changes to the systems for storage are possible and desirable likely to require considerable changes of attitude and possibly of local regulations and laws.

188. A third type or model would be a co-ordinated network of local and regional repositories to handle <u>all</u> types of literature within a predetermined geographical area. Such an arrangement would take account of geographical, transport and communications difficulties and also the likely degree of self-sufficiency in literature provision in each area. Deposit could be mandatory or voluntary, and a sub-option for retention of ownership could be offered if required.

189. The features of such a model would be little central control and possibly better local access to material, but the system would be more expensive to organize and maintain. There would be considerable duplication of materials between repositories and at the same time many requests for deposited material could have to go to more than one regional repository before being satisfied, unless a union list of the holdings of all repositories was compiled. This would, of course, be an expensive undertaking.

190. A fourth possibility is the distribution of the repository function among several, perhaps many, institutions each of which assumes or is given a responsibility for retaining, or receiving from others in the system, items in given categories (e.g. by subject, or language, or country of publication). This option could be national, regional, or by type of institution (e.g. academic libraries). Capital costs of construction may be saved, and collections with existing strengths can be further reinforced in this way. However, the costs of organization and retrieval may be very high in relation to the benefits attained.

191. In practice the most satisfactory types of repository seem to be those that serve a limited geographical area, and those that serve a very large number of institutions. In the first type, close day-to-day co-operation is possible and material can, if necessary, be supplied the same day it is requested. In the second type, duplication can be substantially reduced, with a corresponding reduction in the total space occupied, to justify the problems and costs of operation, including the cost of transferring material and catalogue records to the repository and the cost of and delays in transporting material subsequently to requesting institutions. Also, as noted earlier, conservation can be more easily achieved. In any case, passive storage, the mere receipt of withdrawn materials, yields fewer benefits than active storage, which pools some of the resources of participating institutions to expand the quantity of materials available to them.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Member States should give serious consideration to the establishment of policies to ensure the retention of publications withdrawn from libraries, documentation centres and similar institutions and their continued availability both to national users and those of other countries.

2. Member States, when establishing such policies and systems should give due consideration to their relationship to national acquisitions systems and national interlending systems.

3. National repository plans should provide at least for the retention of all domestic publications for subsequent supply by loan or photocopy.

4. Consideration should be given in repository plans to ensuring the distribution of duplicates to interested parties within the country and to other countries. A study should be made for devising the most effective and economic way of distributing duplicate material within and between countries.

5. Repository plans should take into account the need to ensure the conservation of the physical items to be retained. When appropriate, alternative forms of conservation such as miniaturization and digitization should be adopted.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

The need for action[1]

192. Once publications have been acquired, their full availability to users must be ensured. The need for interlending has been mentioned in Chapters 4 and 5 as an essential concomitant of acquisition and repository programmes. No single institution can be self-sufficient in information provision and every institution will need to call upon resources held in other collections. Even where acquisition is thought desirable this is not always possible as only publications of the last two or three years are normally available for purchase. The mere acquisition and retention of material are of limited value; the strength of such programmes lies in the availability of the material. As noted earlier, local availability can be optimized and existing resources maximized only if reliance can be placed on the availability of material acquired by other institutions.

193. It may be held that the nature of local acquisition will determine the volume and nature of interlending demand and the nature of a national acquisitions programme will determine the volume and nature of international demand. However, one of the main determinants of demand appears to be the existence of an organized and efficient interlending system. To take an example of a country for which fairly accurate figures over a period of time are available, in the United Kingdom, interlending grew from an estimated 400,000 items requested in 1962 to an estimated 3,350,000 in 1977. One of the reasons for this was undoubtedly the creation of the National Lending Library for Science and Technology and later the creation of the British Library Lending Division, which handles some 75 per cent of all interlending requests generated by British institutions.

194. Although the figures for the United Kingdom show a proportionately greater increase than other countries, interlending in most countries has increased significantly in recent years and reflects the growing inability of local institutions to meet the needs of their users. It is thus no longer a marginal activity, it is a necessity which merits thorough examination and planning. In few countries has its scale or importance been recognized, and rarely has it benefited from systematic analysis as an integral part of national library planning.

195. Many countries have mechanisms, procedures and practices which may or may not form a coherent system; they are often informal and may have no element of obligation. As was noted in Chapter 4 informal arrangements can make a valuable contribution, but they are at best only a partial solution to a much larger problem. In many countries a high proportion of requests are unsatisfied, delays are unacceptably long, and demand itself is constrained by low expectation. This last point is of particular importance. In many countries where interlending demand is low there may be felt to be little need for improvement. However, the figures above for the United Kingdom illustrate how the introduction of an efficient system can unleash significant latent demands. It is suggested that systematic measures must be taken if these problems are to be overcome and the needs of users are to be met.

196. In many countries, as already noted, interlending is accorded low priority, even by professionals themselves. This is especially understandable when libraries and other institutions must fight very hard to obtain small budgets, and even then may face considerable additional difficulties in obtaining foreign currency to buy needed material from other countries which may be slow in supply and involve cumbersome formalities. Having thus obtained for their own users with considerable difficulty a limited amount of material which cannot easily be replaced, librarians are understandably reluctant to put it at risk by lending it to others in remote locations, by entrusting it to postal services which are slow and unreliable. This

1. The main sources of information upon which this session is based are: Line, M.B. and others. National Interlending Systems: A Comparative Study of Existing Systems and Possible Models. Paris: Unesco, 1980 (PGI-79/WS/24 Rev) and Line, M.B. et al. The International Provision and Supply of Publications. Paris: Unesco, 1981 (PGI-81/WS/30).

need to safeguard precious limited resources, possibly classified as permanent assets, is often reflected in the personal responsibility imposed on librarians in some countries for items in their care.

197. A lack of resources, far from encouraging co-operation, often produces the opposite effect. It may be thought impossible to make collections that are too small to meet most of the needs of local clients available to a wider audience. Additional resources for local libraries should go hand in hand with freer availability to other libraries: both are essential elements in any national plan.

198. Systematic measures within each country are needed not only to meet the needs of its own inhabitants, but also to fulfil responsibilities to other countries. The need for each country to acquire all national imprints has already been stated. Each country must also accept responsibility for making them available to other countries on loan, either in the original or, within the terms of prevailing copyright legislation, as copies, even if only as a last resort. A country that has an organized and effective system for lending publications within its own borders is much more likely to be able to meet requests received from other countries.

199. It is proposed that to facilitate the availability of material on a systematic basis both to meet the needs of individual countries and to meet international responsibilities, national interlending policies and systems are needed.

Definitions

200. A national interlending policy creates the programme to enable the lending[1] by one institution to another, in the surest and fastest way, of publications that are not available in the institution where they are needed.

A national interlending system is a planned and explicit set of mechanisms, procedures and practices that covers either the actual mechanics of fulfilling the interlending policy, or in the absence of a policy, the procedures and practices for lending material. A system is a set of elements with relations between the elements such that the set may be looked at as a whole. Where there is no policy, the system becomes of paramount importance.

Most countries do not at present have policies or systems in the sense defined here.

Requirements for effective interlending

201. If it is agreed that such systematic procedures are indeed needed, it is suggested that the necessary elements of an organized system are: the collection of documents (treated in Chapter 4); means of locating documents; and procedures and mechanisms for requesting and supplying publications. The main criteria by which they should be judged are level of satisfaction, speed of supply, and cost. That is, an interlending system should be able to satisfy a significant proportion of requests, it should do so quickly, and at reasonable cost. The chapter therefore concentrates primarily on the problems that have to be overcome if these criteria are to be met.

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1. Lending is held to include the sending of photographic and other reproductions in place of the original.

Level of satisfaction

202. The level of satisfaction depends ultimately on acquisition, treated in Chapter 4, where the need for a close link between a national acquisitions programme and a national interlending system was stated. Where no such programme exists the interlending system must take this into account. Where there is a strong acquisitions programme, whether centralized or co-operative, the interlending system may be built on it. It would seem that some national acquisitions programmes have not devoted sufficient attention to the need for the material to be available. Monitoring of interlending demand is necessary to ensure that items required are acquired in sufficient copies. However, failure to satisfy requests may also be associated with inability to locate the material. This can be reduced by effective and up-to-date union catalogues or by effective guides to support an organized acquisitions policy.

203. Items may be in use or otherwise unavailable when requested. This is a common cause of failure, especially for recent publications, and can be reduced by more use of photocopies in place of loans. Union catalogues with multiple locations can help, but items in demand may still be in local use when needed. The provision of multiple copies can also help, but this again is a function of the acquisitions policy.

204. Items may not be loanable--they may be rare, fragile, needed for reference, recently acquired, etc. This too is a fairly common cause of failure. A collection dedicated to interlending can eliminate such problems for recent publications. Older publications can be made more available by copying. In some countries librarians are held personally responsible for their stock, they are therefore very reluctant to lend items. Such responsibilities are directly at odds with the free flow of information and should be eliminated.

205. In most countries the heaviest demand for material needed for technical and economic development is likely to fall on recent science and technology journals. Initial concentration on this area should result in the satisfaction of a significant proportion of requests at relatively low cost. The highest percentage of failures is likely to occur with items in very high demand which may already be in use, and with those in very low demand that might not have been acquired.

Speed of supply

206. The system should aim to satisfy requests quickly, material supplied too late to be of use should be considered as failures. Supply times of longer than one or two weeks rarely inconvenience most users seriously, but expectation of delay can limit confidence in and use of the system.

207. Delays at the requesting library may be associated with inefficient internal procedures which can be improved only by local administration. The need to check the details of requests may be a problem in smaller libraries with limited bibliographical resources. The need to select a possible source of supply can also cause delays. This is necessary with union catalogues with multiple locations and with subject specialization schemes but may be eliminated if a national centre handles all requests, though such centres may in turn have to select a source of supply if they do not themselves have an extensive loan stock. The use of a variety of forms and procedures to make requests to different centres can be reduced by co-operative action and eliminated if only one loan centre is used.

208. Delays in transmission can be caused by long distances if communications are poor. Slow communications can sometimes be reduced by use of express mail or by use of rail and/or road transport; or by use of Telex or computer for sending requests and the sending of photocopies instead of lending originals.

209. Delays at the supplying library may be caused by inefficient internal procedures, due partly to the fact that local libraries design their operations primarily to serve local users. This can be eliminated by a dedicated loan collection and reduced if all requests go through a single centre. The need to handle a variety of forms and procedures noted above can also cause delays at the supplying library and can be met by the same remedial action. A major cause of delay and frustration is the receipt of requests with inadequate information, especially if they have to be returned to the requesting library. A centre with large bibliographic resources can identify some inadequate references, and some may be found in a central loan collection without further checking. The need to send repeated requests to alternative sources of supply which is a very serious cause of delay, can be reduced by an extensive central loan collection or by a limited central collection supported by other selected sources.

210. In general, speed of supply is likely to be most important for science and technology journals. Requests should pass through a minimum of channels and be handled expeditiously at all stages. Channels offering the best chance of success should be used first and interlending requests should be given the same priority as requests from local users. The overall design of the system should be as simple as possible with maximum use of standardized procedures. Supply of the great majority of requests within three weeks appears to be a reasonable aim.

Costs

211. Given the need to satisfy a significant proportion of requests within a reasonable period of time, how can this be achieved at minimum cost? Most of the factors relating to level of satisfaction and speed of supply recur in a consideration of costs, but for convenience they are repeated here. Inefficient internal procedures, the use of a variety of forms and procedures, the need to check inadequate or inaccurate requests, the need to select a possible source of supply, the need to make more than one application, possibly to several sources, and the use of fast methods of transmitting requests and documents all contribute to high costs. In each case remedial action has been suggested above.

212. Further factors associated with high costs include reclaiming and accounting procedures. Repayment is not always required, but in such cases borrowing may appear cheaper than acquisition although this is not always so if all costs are taken into account. The claiming and making of payment on an individual basis are undoubtedly very expensive in terms of administrative costs. The use of deposit accounts and pre-paid coupons can minimize these costs. Countries with currency difficulties may prefer the use of Unesco coupons. Where libraries are in balance, payment may be waived.

213. Union catalogues are a feature of interlending systems in most countries. They are expensive to compile and maintain although some of the costs may be 'hidden' in co-operating libraries. Such costs can be reduced by reducing the need for union catalogues and by rationalization of coverage of libraries, or holdings, etc.

214. All these factors are of course interrelated. Steps taken to reduce one problem could increase another. However, improvements in some aspects are independent of others and can be made without reference to wider issues. Even within existing systems, substantial improvements are possible, though these factors will vary in importance from country to country.

Other considerations

215. Before much improvement can be made to interlending in a country, the existing situation should be analysed; and when a system is operating, its effectiveness should be monitored. In both cases this requires the collection of statistics. In many countries such statistics are not maintained and in some, especially developing countries, it will be difficult to collect some of the data ideally required and some may be unobtainable. However, basic statistics on the volume of demand, the form of publications requested, the source of supply, satisfaction level and speed of supply may prove sufficient for planning purposes. Planning should not await the comprehensive collection of statistics.

216. Whatever system is planned, an interlending centre is needed. Its functions may be limited to co-ordination, monitoring and modification as required, or it may itself be a dedicated lending library. It may house and maintain the main union catalogues. It should be linked with, if not part of, any national library planning centre.

217. Mention has been made above of the use of photographic and other reproductions. The advantages that this affords--continuing availability of the original, and faster and cheaper transmission by letter post--must be set against the cost of equipment which in developing countries may be prohibitive. In some countries there are additional problems of spare parts, adequate paper, fluctuating and erratic electric supply and unfavourable climatic conditions. Further, if copying fees have to be paid, high additional costs may be incurred, and where permission to copy has to be obtained, serious delays may result. Some way must be found of reconciling the legitimate rights of authors, publishers, libraries and users so that the communication of information is not hindered.

218. Mention has also been made of union catalogues. They are to be found in virtually all countries and may play a primary or supporting role. It is therefore very important that they are well planned. Libraries to be included need to be carefully identified to yield the maximum number of separate items possible. If direct access by users is desired, the geographical spread of libraries needs to be considered. The reporting of new entries and withdrawals must be subject to a regular timetable to which libraries must be required to adhere. The form of entries should be consistent; in general it is easier to achieve consistency with short entries. The use of standard codes like ISBNs can aid reporting and reduce costs. Where there are several or many union catalogues in a country, they should if at all possible have similar entry formats to facilitate merging if later desired.

219. While conventional publications are likely to remain the main channel for the recording and transmission of information, account should be taken of technological developments. Use of the computer for transmitting requests and the facsimile transmission of documents will increase. Computer technology can facilitate the construction, maintenance and use of union catalogues. The electronic storage and on-line transmission of full texts, new forms of high density storage, television and satellite technology, will all have an increasing impact. The continuing movement towards the electronic transmission of information may widen still further the gap between developing and industrialized countries, unless serious attempts are made in the former to provide and maintain the very sophisticated infrastructure needed for its exploitation.

Organization of national interlending systems

220. An interlending system may be planned as a single national system, or on a regional (subnational) basis. Regional systems may be appropriate in countries with a federal constitution, in very large countries with severe communications difficulties, in countries where loss rates in transmission are significant, in countries where different languages or cultures exist, or in countries where the volume of interlending is high and library provision in each region is plentiful. Effective regional organization involves problems of co-ordination and may be costly in total national terms since a high level of duplication of stock between regions is required.

221. Systems may be organized on a hierarchical basis. Hierarchical systems may be slow unless a high proportion of requests can be satisfied at the first level. Otherwise it should be possible to bypass lower levels when speed of supply is important.

222. Different systems may exist to serve different types of library. However, these lead to a duplication of effort between systems and greatly increase costs. They add complexity and may cause delays if requests have to be switched between systems.

223. Different systems may also serve different subject or language groups. For practical purposes knowledge cannot easily be thus divided. Systems based on specialization require a high degree of co-ordination. Also, categories of low demand are likely to receive low priority and be poorly provided for.

224. While single systems appear in most cases to be preferable it may be desirable to have different systems for major categories of material such as journals and books. This point is touched on below.

Possible systems

225. The conditions and needs to which a national interlending system must respond are unique to each country. A number of factors, most of them independent of the library system, will affect the design of a national interlending system. These include geography and population; political structure; stage and nature of development and future development priorities; education and research; book production; existing library resources; and copyright law. Thus different solutions may be anticipated to a range of problems which are seen in different ways. Some basic and simplified models are outlined below. These are not proposed for detailed discussion, but merely to give substance to the considerations noted above. However, participants may wish to comment on the suitability of these models and their relative advantages and disadvantages.

226. Interlending demand could be concentrated largely on a single collection, whether dedicated to interlending or combining interlending with other functions. A combination of functions may reduce the efficiency of each, but a combined national reference/lending collection merits consideration, especially in developing countries. A well organized central collection is economical for libraries to use as it offers a single channel for most requests, and direct costs of handling requests are low. It can be organized specifically for interlending, or at least for the fast retrieval and supply of items. A comprehensive collection could supply all or most categories of material to all categories of user, and it can match provision to demand as performance can easily be monitored. However, the

costs of establishing such a collection are high and unit costs will be high unless demand is heavy. A lack of adequate financial support, or the risk of damage, could undermine the whole interlending system. While costs alone may rule out this option, especially in developing countries, there is a strong argument for partial centralized collections able to meet a significant proportion of demand, especially carefully chosen collections of high use journals. There are various ways of identifying the contents of such collections, although none of them is without its disadvantages, and the matter requires more study. Centralized supply of books is harder to justify and achieve.

227. The concentration of demand on a few libraries holding a high proportion of titles in a country can result in a high level of satisfaction. This is most effective if the libraries concentrate on different subject or other areas. The procedures used need to be fully compatible, and strong central planning and coordination are essential. The substantial additional costs faced by these libraries in extending national provision should be reimbursed. There is a danger of conflict between service to local users and an interlending service, but otherwise the advantages and disadvantages are similar to, though less extreme than, concentration on a single resource. The system may be suitable for smaller developed countries, or some developing countries.

228. The provision of material could be allocated between a large number of institutions on a more or less systematic basis. Total national costs may be high because of extensive duplication, there is a danger of conflict between lending and other functions, and the speedy supply of material may be difficult to ensure when it forms only a small part of operations. Material not needed by local users may not be acquired during periods of economic constraint. Such a system may be suitable for some large developed countries that already have a sound basis for it in the form of well developed national acquisitions programmes and subject specialization schemes.

229. Alternatively, libraries may be taken as they are and reliance may be placed on union catalogues. There are numerous difficulties associated with union catalogues, including: lack of currency of additions and withdrawals; inadequate coverage; difficulty of use; and high costs of maintenance and use. They tend to be most successful when they are few and simple, and limited to libraries with significant holdings, thus concentrating demand on those libraries. Such a system cannot be monitored easily to ensure that provision matches demand. It will be particularly difficult to provide items in low or high demand. On-line access to computer-held union catalogues speeds locating and may speed requesting, but it does not increase the ability and willingness to supply items, and the supply of publications themselves is no quicker than in ordinary decentralized systems.

230. The basic models outlined above rarely can or do exist in a pure form--even total decentralization tends in practice to concentrate demand on relatively few libraries, and centralization will need to be supported by other sources. The optimal solution in most countries will consist in a balance between concentration and decentralization; the best balance will depend on local circumstances, especially on the volume of demand and the balance of demand between books and journals. It should however be emphasized that all efficient systems require some form of planning.

International interlending

231. The requirements for international interlending are essentially the same as those that apply to national interlending systems: the initial provision of material, its location and supply. The major problems to be overcome are also the same: low levels of satisfaction, slow speed of supply and high costs. The solution of these problems requires similar measures. It cannot be emphasized too strongly that efficient international interlending is impossible without efficient national interlending systems within each country.

232. One fundamental difference concerns provision. This is properly a function of acquisition and has already been referred to. International availability should aim at exhaustivity, i.e. be capable of supplying all publications. The obvious and only reliable place for a comprehensive collection of publications is in their country of origin. As stated several times above, each country must accept responsibility for making its national imprints available to other countries, as well as to its own citizens.

233. It is also suggested that requests should not be sent abroad for the loan of material that exists within a country. To help ensure this national system, centres are desirable as channels for incoming and outgoing requests. If a national system is by-passed by its own libraries there is little incentive for improvement or knowledge on which to base such improvement.

234. While the planning and implementation within each country of a national interlending system are feasible and necessary, worldwide planning for international availability is unrealistic. Theoretical systems may be designed, but since their practical implementation requires action by numerous individual countries, it cannot be guaranteed.

235. However, while each country must be able to supply its own publications, direct application in every case to the country of publication would prove cumbersome and produce an uneven response. Since some countries will be able to justify and probably wish to develop large collections for their own purposes, these may be able to provide a good service at reasonable cost to other countries. This happens at present in a limited number of cases; most international demand would seem to be placed on a small number of centres. The existence of such collections may obviate the need for similar extensive collections in neighbouring countries.

236. Alternatively countries within a region may decide by international agreement to establish a regional lending collection. While this may be attractive in principle, there is a significant difference between action by an individual country that incidentally can meet regional needs and co-operative agreements between countries. The latter face considerable obstacles, not least those of funding and administration. Experience to date suggests that to overcome these obstacles is not easy, and further study is needed to see if such systems have any real advantage over access to a few very large collections or the country of publication. Similar considerations apply to regional co-operative schemes based on the allocation of responsibilities among the countries concerned or the interlinking of their interlending systems to form in effect a single system.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Member States with national interlending policies or systems should examine existing levels and methods of provision in terms of level of satisfaction, speed of supply and costs, and consider their suitability to meet present and future requirements in order to develop and maintain effective levels of availability.

2. Member States which have no national interlending policies should consider their establishment as an essential means of improving availability. Pilot projects should be set up in a few Member States with international and other assistance for the establishment of national interlending systems which would serve as models for others where no such systems exist.

3. The experience and success of existing regional and other international co-operative schemes should be evaluated, with a view to identifying the likely value and most appropriate nature of such schemes in future.

4. Each country should accept responsibility for making available all domestic publications to other countries as well as its own citizens, either by loan or, within existing copyright legislation, as copies.

5. Each country should establish a national loan centre or centres to channel and monitor outgoing and incoming requests and such centres should collect statistics of international lending. Serious consideration should be given to the role of such centres for the planning, development and supervision of national interlending systems.

6. Where at present applicable, the imposition on librarians of personal responsibility for their stock should be removed.

7. Where conditions are appropriate, feasibility studies should be undertaken, with the support of Unesco and other relevant organizations, of the possibility of developing regional (multi-national) interlending policies and systems.

8. The feasibility of closer co-ordination between schemes of international provision and supply should be explored.

9. Countries that need or can justify substantial collections for efficient national provision should consider whether and how far these can be used also as sources of international supply.

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Introduction

237. Timely and accurate information is essential for economic, social and personal development. The availability of publications is at present far from universal, and serious efforts are needed to improve the availability of publications to users. Actions to be taken appropriate to each function have already been stated. This chapter picks out the more important of these, and in addition considers the need for actions that cut across functions, as well as the agents of action. UAP, if it is to have any practical meaning, must be action-oriented.

238. The basic aim of UAP is the improved availability of publications to users. There is clearly a need for the identification of types of user, both actual and potential, and their needs. Similarly there is a need to assess existing resources and services which, when matched against needs, will indicate the extent of remedial action to be taken. The working document has attempted to mirror these concerns by treating in the first instance users and secondly the functions needed to meet their needs.

239. Throughout the working document an attempt has been made to keep in mind the very considerable obstacles that have to be overcome if the requirements of users are to be met. It may nevertheless be felt, especially by developing countries, that considerations of the theoretical requirements of functions are not always sufficiently related to practical realities. The formidable barriers to UAP are fully recognized, and it is understandable if some of them may seem overwhelming. It would be better to take a more positive view, and identify their nature and strength in order to explore ways of overcoming them.

240. Obstacles to be faced may be:

economic--a dire shortage of resources, human, financial and material, limit services that can be provided and the scope for improvement;

technical--a lack of reprographic equipment, insufficient maintenance capability, lack of paper and spare parts and erratic electrical supply, inadequate printing and binding equipment, lack of equipment to use micro-forms, audio-visual material and computerized services;

socio-cultural--low education level, lack of motivation to use services, poor repackaging and presentation of information, language barriers, lack of training and tradition in the use of information, resistance to change, the intangibility of the benefits of information;

legal--regulations associated with the protection of intellectual creation and property;

political--censorship, restrictions for national security, the lack of appropriate policies and plans and a suitable infrastructure, cumbersome and bureaucratic administrative and financial procedures;

physical--distance from services, personal handicaps;

functional--ineffective performance of systems, the lack of effective policies and procedures, lack of tools, lack of bibliographic control by the book trade and libraries, lack of trained personnel.

The list is indeed formidable and participants could undoubtedly identify further barriers. However, while some of these problems may be beyond the scope of UAP they can all be tackled. They should be seen not as insuperable barriers but rather as a stimulus for intense and continuing pressure for the provision of the necessary resources.

Basic requirements of UAP

241. The detailed discussions in the preceding chapters indicate certain basic requirements of fundamental importance. They may be summarized as follows. Effective availability requires:

an evaluation of the needs of actual and potential users and how far they can be met by and through publications;

a close match of the publishing and distribution programmes of publishers in each country to national and international requirements;

the creation or improvement of effective book trade channels to ensure the prompt availability of material to customers;

the development by libraries, documentation centres and archives of effective policies and procedures for the acquisition of material, whether by purchase, gift, exchange or other means, to serve present and future needs;

the development by libraries, documentation centres and archives of effective policies and procedures for the supply of publications, in the original or as copies, to remote as well as to local users;

the permanent retention within each country of at least one copy of publications acquired by its libraries and archives;

the acceptance by individual countries of full responsibility for the acquisition, supply by loan and retention of all their own publications to meet the needs of their own citizens and those of other countries;

measures to ensure the development of professional and technical manpower required;

the education of users and their active involvement;

awareness and application of new technologies as appropriate.

These basic requirements together constitute a set of fundamental objectives. However if these requirements are to be met additional requirements must be considered.

National information planning and development

242. It is clear that significant responsibilities rest with individual countries if they are to meet national and international responsibilities. Each country must determine for itself how availability can best be improved. National concerns, development objectives, priorities and problems which will be different from country to country should be kept in view. National information planning,

as promoted through Unesco's UNISIST programme and the NATIS concept, is the framework for adequate availability and will require a national policy. It is the function of the policy to assign responsibility for assessing user needs, for providing services through appropriate structures such as libraries and archives, for developing the professional and technical manpower required, for the education and continuing involvement of users, and for the introduction of new technology and research as necessary.

243. Planning should be related to practicalities. Attainable goals should be set within a realistic time schedule and entail moderate finances; actual needs and available resources should be identified and priorities should be set in accordance with local, social, political, cultural, technical and economic conditions.

244. Decision making cannot be done as an abstract exercise. Political and social issues must be taken into account, and pressure groups and personal prejudices may influence decisions. There may also be conflict between vested interests. A further problem is that development planners, policy-makers and managers may not be aware of the place, or convinced of the value, of information, nor may they make use of information systems and services, which may therefore not be considered as a priority area and get the necessary support. As noted in earlier chapters, it may be necessary to produce evidence of ways in which information has contributed to development and the solution of problems. This is especially needed in countries that lack a tradition in the use of information for problem solving. Advisory groups may be necessary to provide liaison between information professionals, decision makers and other user groups.

245. National plans for library and information services exist in many, though by no means all, countries. However, rarely do such plans incorporate document supply as an integral element. There is often an assumption that the acquisition and bibliographic recording of publications are sufficient. Lending services, though they are the key to improved availability to users, are often paid scant if any attention. It may be that the need for availability is so obvious that it has often not been stated as an explicit objective. However, experience shows that unless objectives are clearly stated and defined they fail to benefit from systematic analysis and concerted action. Publications must be supplied because they contain needed information, and any national information policy must take account of this.

Co-operation and co-ordination

246. It has been stressed in preceding chapters that the various elements in the information community exist in a symbiotic relationship. To act on elements in isolation is likely to produce results that are both more costly and less effective than if action is planned on them as a whole, or at least there is close co-operation between the elements. This will require machinery of a more or less formal nature. Since each function is a major one in its own right working parties or subcommissions may be set up to work out detailed plans and systems within the overall national information plan.

247. Co-operative or co-ordinating machinery may be difficult to achieve if responsibilities are divided among a number of ministries and agencies; it may be necessary to allocate responsibilities and accountability to appropriate bodies, but allocation itself implies some central body. The lack of co-ordinating machinery need not and should not preclude action by individual elements and on individual functions. This may bring substantial benefits and may so highlight deficiencies

in other functions that the need for action on them too becomes more obvious. Care should in any case be taken to avoid over-elaborate machinery which could possibly hamper rather than promote improvements.

248. A major obstacle to improvement may be the existence of well-established and stable systems that are either resistant to change to meet new circumstances or that do not combine well with other systems, perhaps equally well established, serving other functions. This obstacle is however more apparent than real. If systems do not change they will eventually cease to be effective. The issue is not whether, but how and when, change can be brought about. Gradual modifications responding to short-term needs could make matters worse, but if a realistic long-term plan can be set out the various elements can work towards it.

International co-operation

249. It has been noted that while individual countries must accept responsibility for their own publications this will not lead to self-sufficiency in information provision. Improved availability within individual countries will further, but will not in itself fully achieve, international availability. Developing countries will be faced with a particular need to acquire and borrow significant quantities of material from industrialized countries while their own services are being developed. However, industrialized countries also show a large, permanent and necessary reliance on importing and borrowing material from other countries. Improvements to availability within countries must therefore be accompanied by improvements to international availability, by strengthening the links and channels between individual countries to ensure that material can be bought or borrowed as and when required, that national developments are compatible with one another, and that assistance can be given when relevant to countries in need.

The need for research

250. Planning at both the national and international level requires research to obtain valid and reliable data on the basis of which sound recommendations may be made and action taken. An appreciation of the scale and nature of the problem is a prerequisite to action. The research undertaken within the UAP programme has attempted to analyse the major functions and proposed various models for each. These models present a number of basic solutions suitable for different types of country at different stages of development. Permutations and combinations of these models may be needed and alternative solutions may be found.

251. Improvements to availability are ultimately the responsibility of individual countries. As already noted, the first step must be an analysis of actual and potential needs, an assessment of existing resources and of the scale and nature of other influencing factors, such as the efficiency of the communications network, development priorities expressed by governments, and the resources available for the improvement of existing services and the development of new ones.

252. While information personnel, and especially users, may be well aware that publications are not universally available and that problems exist, there is a marked absence, with few exceptions, of objective data on existing services. Even when such data are available, rarely do cost-effective considerations predominate. Many published descriptions of systems give little or no indication of performance. Further, much of the literature of developments expresses hope rather than positive intention, and rarely is evidence produced to support statements of

needs and possible solutions. Sound planning must however be based on facts, not on opinions. Without adequate plans supported by clear evidence the chances of obtaining additional resources are much reduced.

253. It should be emphasized that research does not necessarily imply costly and lengthy studies. Often well-designed data collection and analysis can yield sufficient information as a basis for action without the expenditure of a great deal of money and effort.

Planning for the future

254. While considerable advances can be made quite quickly, major improvements are a long-term objective and short-term measures should be set within a context of long-term planning. Improvements to collections and services will inevitably lead to an increase in the level and complexity of demand and systems must be sufficiently flexible to accommodate growth and change. Research should therefore not be confined to an analysis of the existing situation. It should also take account as far as possible of future probabilities.

255. Technological advances, while their extent and influence cannot be predicted precisely, will certainly alter present patterns of publishing and supplying material and may radically affect future availability of publications. Technology tends to develop its own impetus, and it is important for political, social and humane reasons that it should be used wisely. Particular attention must be paid to developing countries, which already lag far behind industrialized countries in the availability of conventional publications. Continuing movement towards the electronic transmission of information may widen this gap still further unless serious attempts are made to provide and maintain the sophisticated infrastructure needed for the exploitation of computerized services. However, while new technology should be used as and when appropriate, it is unlikely to provide instant solutions to long-standing problems. Conventional books and journals will continue to be published, and for the immediate future they will constitute the overwhelming majority of publications and remain the dominant channels for most recorded literature. Great though the impact of electronic technology may eventually be, action is still needed to improve the existing unsatisfactory situation.

The agents of action

256. The provision of services and the improvement of existing ones are ultimately the responsibility of governments and their agencies, individual firms and institutions, professional associations and users.

257. It has already been noted that in many countries the provision of library and information services is accorded low priority. This may be due to financial realities and the more visible need for improvements in other areas such as food production and medical care. It may also be due in part to a lack of awareness of the benefits to be derived from improved availability as a support for the development and maintenance of literacy, education--both formal and non-formal--as a basis for economic and social development and for the optimum use of resources, to promote innovations and enhance productivity and services. Food production and medical care, mentioned above as more obvious priorities, may themselves benefit very greatly from information and its proper application.

258. The development of information services is in the interest and often under the control of governments, as are other areas, such as the communications system, import controls, currency regulations, etc., that have a direct or indirect bearing on the activities of the information community. The responsibilities of governments are thus of crucial importance. As government policy directly affects the national provision of library, archive and information services, and budgetary allocations determine the extent and efficiency of the services, major progress can result only from a firm commitment by governments to the principle of UAP. It is their responsibility to provide a suitable policy framework as well as adequate financial and organizational support to ensure the translation of policy into effective practical action at all levels.

259. At present many sections of the community have no access to library services, especially in rural areas of developing countries. Such services as exist usually operate in and from urban centres; there is a pressing need to develop rural services. The provision of public and school libraries is of particular importance.

260. However, responsibilities do not lie only with governments. The formulation of detailed policy, and especially the translation of policy into action, will fall to information professionals. It is they who are ultimately responsible for improvements to availability, and it is vital that they should bring their knowledge and practical experience to bear on the determination of the policies they will have to implement.

261. It is the practitioners who are best placed to perceive where problems lie and the remedial action necessary. It is they who through contact with users can best assess whether policies and procedures are meeting needs, what needs remain unmet and the nature and scope of improvements needed. As noted already, significant benefits can be secured within individual organizations and institutions at little expense, though co-operation and co-ordination with other institutions and sectors of the information community will also be needed. It is the responsibility of all information professionals to ensure that users have full knowledge of and the ability to exploit local, national and international resources. Thus improvements also require a commitment on the part of information professionals to the concepts of use and availability.

262. This requires the training of professionals to help users get the best out of services. In many countries the lack of resources means that libraries have to play multiple roles, providing library, documentation, information and archive services. There is therefore a need for training in these different areas. The introduction of new technologies will also require training in their exploitation. All too often information professionals tend to wait for users and users expect information to be brought to them. The community of users is increasing while professionals may remain preoccupied with technicalities to the detriment of personal contact. There is much need to improve the image and status of the information professional through the revision and orientation of library science curricula towards users.

263. Relevant professional associations may act as a forum for developing and a focus for maintaining such commitment, and can ensure that the balanced needs of a profession as a whole are taken into account. Individual organizations may be unable in isolation to obtain the resources needed for improvements to be made. The corporate voice of professional associations can act as a strong influence when representations are made to governments, publishers, the book trade and libraries and other information related institutions for improved services. Since, as noted above, publishers, booksellers and libraries exist in a symbiotic relationship, their professional bodies should meet to consider common action that their members can take or that they can combine to press upon governments.

264. It has been stressed that users should be considered as part of the total system. The development of information services is relevant to all sectors of society, and services should create new demand as well as satisfying existing demand. The search for and use of information are an integral part of a culture. There is much need for training in the use of information resources in connection with activities at work and at home. Since over 40 per cent of the population in developing countries is under 15 such training should start at an early stage if maximum benefit is to be derived from this great human potential and its contribution to the future supply of skilled manpower.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO UNESCO AND IFLA

Unesco and/or IFLA should make government authorities and regional and international organizations sensitive to the acuteness and scale of the problem.

Unesco and/or IFLA should continue to promote the importance of the availability of publications as an essential element of national library and information planning.

Unesco and/or IFLA should take steps to demonstrate the importance of the availability of publications for national development by the compilation of case histories.

Unesco and/or IFLA should assist countries in the planning of national library and information services by helping determine goals, prepare guidelines, by providing expertise and by indicating possible alternatives from which to choose.

Individual countries should consider the need for co-operation between all relevant sectors of the information community in the planning of services.

That Unesco and IFLA should continue to support international co-operation to improve availability between countries, and to ensure the compatibility of national developments with one another.

Unesco and IFLA should continue to support relevant research, particularly in developing countries or for their benefit.

Unesco and IFLA should examine to what extent modern technologies make it possible to improve access to publications.

Unesco and IFLA should continue to support UAP:

(i) by making it better known through the dissemination of research findings and through publications;

(ii) by organizing regional and national meetings designed to seek solutions applicable at these levels and by promoting their implementation.

Individual countries should accept responsibility for ensuring that their national imprints are acquired for permanent retention, to be made available either by loan, or in the form of copies, both to their own inhabitants and to other countries.